THE FALL OF THE RUSSIAN EMPIRE: A SPIRITUAL HISTORY (1825-1925)

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Volume 1. From the Decembrist Rebellion to the 1905 Revolution (1825-1905)

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PROLOGUE

"Behind all wars, revolution, downfall of kingdoms, – all the political events of external history – lies the hidden working of spiritual laws and God's Providence concerning the fates of peoples and nations. Any other explanation of the reasons for the revolution of 1917 would be incomprehensible and inaccurate. The revolution was allowed by God because of Russian society's apostasy from Him, which brought God's wrath down upon Russia. "As in the many cases of ancient Israel's apostasy from God, about which we read in the Bible, Russia's malady could not be cured by ordinary measures. For the sake of instruction and correction God would hand the Jews over into the hands of infidels; the very same fate befell Russia in the beginning of the 20th century."

This book is a study of the fall of the Russian Empire and the early years of the Russian revolution from a spiritual, providential point of view – the point of view of Orthodox Christianity, the faith of the majority of the population of the Russian empire. While not ignoring the political, economic and social dimensions of the struggle, it seeks to place these within the context of this fourth, religious dimension. In this way it seeks to plug a major gap in the literature on the revolution, which almost always either bypasses Orthodox Christianity completely, or makes only passing allusions to it as if it were a secondary, minor factor.

With this aim in mind, the rule of Tsar Nicholas II is re-assessed in a much more positive light than is commonly found in the clichéd and derogatory descriptions of most western interpretations. Moreover, the views of conservative writers of the pre-revolutionary period such as Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), Dostoyevsky, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, Vladimir Soloviev, Lev Tikhomirov, Semyon Frank, Protopriest John Vostorgov and Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), together with the works of recent writers, such as Alexander Solzhenitsyn's important work on Russo-Jewish relations, are quoted and discussed at length. In the chapters not relating directly to the Church, I have made extensive use of the works of western historians such as Dominic Lieven, Christopher Clark, Niall Ferguson, Richard Pipes, Margaret Macmillan, Noel Malcolm, Douglas Smith, Philip Bobbitt, Bernard Simms, Paul Johnson, Sir Isaiah Berlin, Sir Geoffrey Hosking, Misha Glenny, Miranda Carter, Misha Glenny, Oliver Figes, Adam Zamoyski, Simon Sebag Montefiore and others.

This book covers the one-hundred-year period from the Decembrist rebellion in 1825, the first ideologically motivated attempt to overthrow the

Russian Autocracy, to the death of the last major representative of pre-revolutionary, Tsarist Russia, Patriarch Tikhon, in 1925. For there is a clear causal link between the Decembrist rebellion and the Bolshevik revolution. As I.P. Yakobi pointed out, "the corruption of the upper classes could not fail to influence the other strata of society. From the nobility the revolutionary turmoil spread to the new class of the intelligentsia, [whence] there appeared organized terror. The assassins followed on the heels of the Russian Tsars. Emperor Alexander II was killed by the members of the "People's Freedom' movement. His successor was saved by a miracle. His grandson, Nicholas II, together with the whole of his family, found a martyric death at the hands of the heirs of the Decembrists – the Bolsheviks."

The book is divided into seven parts. The first, "The Gendarme of Europe", covers the reign of Tsar Nicholas I, the most powerful and authoritarian of the later tsars. The second part, "Reform", covers the great reforms undertaken by Tsar Alexander II and ends with his death in 1881. The third, "Reaction", covers the conservative reaction under Tsar Alexander III. The fourth, "Abortive Revolution", covers the early part of the reign of Tsar Nicholas II, the Russo-Japanese War and the abortive revolution of 1905. The fifth section, "Counter-Revolution" covers the Stolypin years, the Balkan Wars and the situation on the eve of the First World War. The sixth, "The Fall of the Autocracy", covers the First World War, the February coup and the February revolution. The seventh, "The Collective Antichrist" covers the October revolution and the Civil War until the departure of the last White Russian army from Russian soil in 1922 and on through the rise of Stalin to the death of Patriarch Tikhon in 1925.

Of course, the roots of the revolution go much further back than 1825. Peter the Great had damaged the foundations of Russian life already in the early eighteenth century, and Freemasonry infected the educated classes increasingly from that time. However, it was the Decembrist rebellion that introduced the virus of the revolution into the bloodstream of Russian consciousness as a whole, from which it never departed thereafter; so this has been chosen as the starting point. Again, the revolution continued to develop well after 1925 – savage war was still being waged against the Church and the peasantry, the twin supports of the tsarist regime, into the 1930s and beyond. And yet all the essential traits of the revolution were revealed in all their massively satanic significance in the period covered in this book.

Works that study the revolution in this very broad spiritual dimension, while not ignoring the political, economic and social dimensions discussed in more conventional studies, are few and far between. One of the best I have found is S.S. Oldenburg's *The Reign of the Emperor Nicholas II* (Belgrade, 1939). Another is Archpriest Lev Lebedev's *Great Russia* (St. Petersburg, 1999). One

of the purposes of my book is to bring Fr. Lev's great work to the attention of English-speaking readers, and to this end I have quoted large sections from it. And if I have ventured to disagree with some of his emphases, this in no way diminishes my admiration for, and indebtedness to, his work as a whole.

Through the prayers of our holy Fathers, Lord Jesus Christ, our God, have mercy on us! Amen.

February 17/ March 2, 2018.
St. Hermogen, Patriarch of Moscow.
East House, Beech Hill, Mayford, Woking, Surrey. GU22 0SB.

INTRODUCTION

We have no king, because we feared not the Lord.
Hosea 10.3.

"Terrible and mysterious," wrote Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky), second chief-hierarch of the Russian Church Abroad, "is the dark visage of the revolution. Viewed from the vantage point of its inner essence, it is not contained within the framework of history and cannot be studied on the same level as other historical facts. In its deepest roots it transcends the boundaries of space and time, as was determined by Gustave le Bon, who considered it an irrational phenomenon in which certain mystical, supernatural powers were at work. But what before may have been considered dubious became completely obvious after the Russian Revolution. In it everyone sensed, as one contemporary writer expressed himself, the critical incarnation of absolute evil in the temper of man; in other words, the participation of the devil – that father of lies and ancient enemy of God, who tries to make man his obedient weapon against God – was clearly revealed."

"The critical incarnation of absolute evil in the temper of man", "not contained within the framework of history": such a description indicates that in order to understand the revolution we need to look beyond conventional political, social and economic categories. We need to put it into the deeper context of Divine Providence, and the struggle between God and Satan for the souls of men. The left-wing historian E.H. Carr once wrote that history could either be "a study of human achievement" or "relapse into theology – that is to say, a study… of the divine purpose". This book does not aim to "relapse" into theology. But it proceeds from a profound conviction that merely explicating the deeds of men without placing them in the wider and deeper context of Divine Providence will only result, in the words of Macbeth, in "a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing".

The Marxist understanding of history as a process fully and exclusively determined by impersonal material and economic forces has been sufficiently discredited. The approach favoured by western historians – that is, the study of the political, economic and social antecedents of the catastrophe – certainly has its place and has produced much valuable work; and I shall be citing liberally from the works of western historians such as Richard Pipes, Oliver Figes, Dominic Lieven and Christopher Clark. But even western writers have begun to sense the inadequacy of their approach when applied to the revolution. It is time now to go a step further and recognize that in all human history, and especially in such gigantic cataclysms as the Russian revolution, it is not only the impersonal forces of nature and the personal wills of men that matter, but also the all-good Will of God and the all-evil will of the devil.

Such a complex and profound event as the revolution needs a multi-dimensional approach.

Faced with the now indisputable fact of "the most colossal case of political carnage in history", as Martin Malia puts it, western historians have been strangely coy in delivering moral verdicts. Nor is this because they *never* deliver damning verdicts: when it comes to the Nazi Holocaust – which, however terrible it was, destroyed far fewer lives, directly and indirectly, than Communism - such verdicts are frequent and obligatory. But when it comes to Soviet Communism, the tendency has been to refrain from "judgementalism". This was especially true when the Soviet Union was still in existence, and a very large proportion of western intellectuals were ideologically sympathetic to it. But even since the fall of Soviet Communism in 1989-91, when the opening of the Soviet archives left even the most faithful leftists in no doubt about the enormity of its crimes and the falseness of its ideology, the level of the condemnation of Communism has never reached the level of the condemnation of Nazism...

It was different for those who suffered under both systems and were able to compare them directly. "Arrested by the Gestapo during the war, Dimitrije Djordjevich, a young Chetnik leader, survived Mauthausen only to fall into the hands of the Gestapo's communist successor when he returned to Belgrade. 'Both [organizations] had in common the violence with which they imposed their authority. The Gestapo destroyed the body; Ozna [the Yugoslav KGB] raped the soul. The Gestapo killed by shooting and by imprisonment in death camps; Ozna engaged in brainwashing, demanding repentance for sins not committed and self abnegation. 'The difference was one of physical as opposed to spiritual annihilation.'"

It is important to understand the reasons for the western blindness to the full evil of communism – even now, well after its evils have been fully exposed. One reason undoubtedly lies in a besetting weakness of almost all men: even when we have seen through the falseness of our former beliefs, we nevertheless seek excuses for ourselves, excuses that make our errors "understandable" and perhaps not really that bad after all. And yet former Nazis or Nazi sympathizers are never given this grace: their views remain inexcusable and unforgiveable, and the hounding of Nazis, even minor ones, continues without mercy and without end.

On the other hand, it is an extraordinary fact that no equivalent of the Nuremburg trials has ever taken place in the East; no Communist has ever been put on trial or punished for his views in the post-Cold War period in Russia, and the Soviet Communist Party itself was "acquitted" in a trial in 1992. And so Vladimir Putin, for example, can boast of his membership of the

KGB, saying that "once a chekist, always a chekist" – and still gets to have tea with the Queen of England, whose relative, Tsar Nicholas II, was murdered by the Cheka…

A deeper reason lies in the fact that Communism and Liberalism are closely related ideologies, being both derived, in their modern forms, from the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. They both offer a utopian vision for mankind based on rationalism, science and education, in which religious belief has no place. Liberalism is relatively more individualistic than Communism, gives more place to individual initiative in economic and social life, and is more tolerant of individual differences and idiosyncracies, such as religion. But the similarities between them are more striking than their differences. And from the point of view of traditional Christianity, the main difference is that while the one destroys faith slowly, the other does it relatively quickly. Thus Stuart Reed writes: "In the Cold War, an unworkable revolutionary creed, communism, yielded to a workable revolutionary creed, liberal capitalism. Now liberal capitalism has replaced communism as the chief threat to the customs, traditions and decencies of Christendom…"

In view of the inner spiritual kinship between Liberalism and Communism, western intellectuals who adhere to Liberalism feel compelled to be not too hard on the sister ideology – "no enemies to the left," as they used to say in the Russian Duma. It is a different matter with anti-Enlightenment political ideologies such as Nazism or Orthodox Christian Autocracy, in spite of the fact that, as Jonathan Glover writes, "opponents of the Enlightenment can seem to grasp truths which elude its followers, and repudiation of the Enlightenment is now fashionable among philosophers". And so Soviet Communism, whatever its horrors, is felt to be "justified" at any rate to this extent: that the "evil" autocracy of "Bloody" Nicholas had to be replaced - after all, as Lenin said, you can't make an omelette without breaking eggs. Of course, it was regrettable that the revolution could not have stopped during its liberal phase, between February and October, 1917. But the intention was good: it was only the execution that was poor…

Daniel Pipes confirms this analysis: "The Soviet Union appeared less bad than the Third Reich. The Nazis rose and fell in spectacular fashion; the communist trajectory was a more gentle one. The Third Reich lasted only twelve years and ended in a blaze of gun smoke and fire; the Soviet Union endured for three-quarters of a century and expired with a whimper. These differences have important consequences. While the results of Nazi conspiracism are the subjects of innumerable studies and artistic works, the comparable Soviet actions remain relatively obscure. Auschwitz, Birkenau, and the other death camps are known by name, but who knows their Soviet equivalents? German archives were captured in a fell swoop. Soviet ones are

slowly unveiled.

"The same distinction applies to the two dictators. Hitler left behind a far more terrible reputation than Stalin. One ranted; the other calculated. Hitler made no discernible attempt to disguise his wickedness. In contrast, Stalin hid his evil with such diligence and success that his crimes became known only three years after his death and were then widely received with shock. Because the facts about Stalin came out in so disjointed a way, his crimes to this day lack the notoriety of Hitler's murderousness. Hitler so discredited himself that to find any virtues in him implies a kind of insanity. Not so Stalin. If Hitler's apologists are beyond the pale, Stalin's remain within it…

"Analysts sympathize more with the Left. The liberal orientation of most scholars and journalists means that they treat comparable phenomena in different ways. They do not hide the Left's turpitude, but they present it less harshly, in isolation, and usually as the idiosyncracies of an individual rather than faults intrinsic to the system. Leninism would have been more humane if only Stalin had not highjacked the revolution…"

One of the purposes of this book is to show that the exact opposite of this was true: Marxism-Leninism was already the height of inhumanity well before Stalin came to power. Its intention was evil from the beginning, and the execution of this intention was, tragically, all too effective. Moreover, it can be argued that Communism was the father to Nazism; or the two ideologies can be seen as sibling offshoots of essentially the same revolutionary impulse. To that end I have started the book over sixty years before 1917, showing the development of the revolutionary movement from the beginning of the reign of Tsar Alexander II. This will show that if some of the followers of the revolution naively thought that they were advancing the cause of human happiness, and so were acting out of a kind of misguided compassion, this could in no way be said of the leaders, such as Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin. Thus during the famine of 1891, when the leaders of liberal society, headed by the Tsarevich Nicholas, were rushing to help the starving, the young Vladimir Ulyanov, though living right in the middle of the famine-struck region, ostentatiously declared himself against helping the poor in any way because it would distract from the main aim: the destruction of the hated tsarist regime. Therefore we must conclude concerning the revolution, contrary to the liberals, that "a good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits shall ye know them…" (Matthew 7.20).

The corollary of this is that the tsarist regime was nothing like as bad as it has been painted in Soviet and western histories. "True," as Bishop Dionysius

(Alferov) of Novgorod writes, "now they no longer repeat the Soviet clichés about an 'extremely backward country' and 'the prison of the peoples'.

"They speak more about social injustice, which, supposedly, was liquidated by the revolution.

"Social injustice is inevitable in any state. It existed also in Tsarist Russia, but in the last reign of Emperor Nicholas II it was less than in the whole history of the country: no more than 5-7% of the population lived below the poverty line. The greatest social injustice was established precisely by the communist regime, which liquidated the people in whole classes, estates and social groups."

The Tsarist regime is especially infamous for its supposedly brutal treatment of political dissidents. And yet if we compare it in this respect with the Soviet regime, there is simply no comparison. As Kirill Alexandrov writes: "The death penalty was applied in Tsarist Russia. However, in the Russian empire in the course of 37 years (1875-1912), on all counts, including serious crimes, and also the sentences of the military-field and military-district courts, no more than 6000 people were killed (on average 162 executions a year).

"In the USSR in the course of 30 years (1923-1953), for political reasons alone the Bolsheviks shot more than 750,000 people (on average more than 25,000 executions per year for political accusations). The greatest quantity of executions of 'enemies of the people' (more than 680,000, mainly peasants and collective farm workers) took place during 'Yezhovshina' (1937-1938). This data was put forward by the Minister of the Internal Affairs of the USSR in 1953…"

Of course, mistakes were made by the Tsars; and of course, the regime could not have fallen if it and the country as a whole had not been infected by disease from within. But that disease was precisely western liberalism and its more radical sister, socialism. As for Tsar Nicholas himself, even now western historians – with some honourable exceptions, such as Dominic Lieven - trot out the old clichés about his supposed weakness of will, obstinacy, etc. So another purpose of this book is to show that the tsar actually defended Christian civilization against the ultimate barbarism with great skill and courage, and was overwhelmed at the last only because all the leaders in the army and society, as well as his western allies, were against him. Of course, he, too, made mistakes – the Far Eastern policy, Rasputin, perhaps his abdication (although this is debatable, as we shall see, and was in any case forced); but these pale into insignificance beside his positive achievements, which were crowned, in the end, with the crown of martyrdom and the recognition of his sanctity even by today's neo-Soviet Russia.

This brings me to the question of my Russian sources and my attitude to the approach favoured by many contemporary Russian historians – that is, the understanding of the Russian revolution as the product of a Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy. Now this approach is largely shunned by western historians for reasons of political correctness. But the fact is that conspiracies do exist, and in 1917 there certainly was a conspiracy to overthrow the Tsar that was initiated and successfully executed mainly by Jews and Freemasons from both Russia and abroad. However, while accepting the basic thesis of nationalist Russian historians that there *was* a Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy to overthrow the tsar, I have not given it the centrality and almost exclusive importance that these historians attribute to it. For neither political and economic factors, as western and westernizing historians assert, nor the presence of conspirators within and without the body politic, as Russian nationalist historians emphasize, are sufficient to explain how such a mighty organism as the Russian Empire not only fell, but fell so resoundingly, with such bitter and long-term consequences both for Russia and the whole world. In order to understand this fall we also need a fourth dimension, the *spiritual* or religious dimension of explanation; only in that way can we understand the revolution in its full breadth and depth.

The spiritual approach to history sees the ultimate cause of a nation's success or failure in its spiritual health. This is not to decry material causes, but assigns to them a secondary significance; if the spiritual disease were healed, the material deficiencies would turn out to be irrelevant. This approach differs fundamentally from the secular, material approach to history as exemplified by Francis Fukuyama, who writes that "societies from Russia to China" – wrongly, in his opinion – "attributed military setbacks to inadequate observance of religious obligations; instead of spending time reorganizing and reequipping the army, they devoted resources to increased rites and sacrifices." The Russian revolution provides a test-case for examining the validity of the spiritual and material approaches. My thesis, without denying the influence of political, social, economic, military and cultural factors, is that the ultimate cause of the fall of the Russian empire was spiritual: "We have no king, because we feared not the Lord".

Now the central object or institution that we discern when approaching the revolution from the spiritual or religious point of view is the Orthodox Church – an institution that western historians have tended to ignore, or pass over very superficially, and which Russian historians have tended to distort through the prism of Soviet and neo-Soviet reality. Few historians of the Middle East today would claim that it is possible to acquire a deep understanding of their subject without acquiring a more than superficial understanding of Islam. And yet it remains the case that most historians of

Russia have a minimal understanding of that faith and Church which inspired the great majority of the inhabitants of Russia both before and for a long time after the revolution, and which is still vital to an understanding of contemporary Russia.

A new approach is needed, one that makes the struggle between the Church and the State – and that between Orthodoxy and the liberal/socialist/ renovationist elements within the Church - the *central* aspect of the revolution.

My aim in this book, therefore, has been to provide a spiritual-ecclesiastical history of the Russian revolution, somewhat on the model of the Venerable Bede's *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. I describe the main political events, but from the point of view, primarily, of the Orthodox Church and the Orthodox Christians, who, after all, constituted the majority of the population for the whole of the period under review. My thesis is that the Orthodox Church was not only the heart and soul of pre-revolutionary Russia, but also the last pre-revolutionary institution to fall to the Bolsheviks – and remnants of it, both in Russia and abroad, have not fallen yet.

This point of view presupposes a very wide eschatological framework whose basic theses can be summarized as follows:-

God wishes that all men should come to a knowledge of the truth and be saved. His instrument in bringing men to this knowledge and this salvation is the One, Holy, Orthodox-Catholic and Apostolic Church. Now the Church can exist and even flourish without any political support, as was clearly demonstrated during the first three centuries of the Church's existence under the pagan Roman emperors. However, the conversion of the Roman Empire itself during the reign of St. Constantine the Great gave the Church a wonderful opportunity to extend her influence throughout the oikoumene and even into the most recalcitrant sphere of human life – politics - by her entering into a "symphonic" relation with the Christian emperor whereby the emperor was in charge of political matters while the Church was in charge of spiritual matters.

Of course, together with this opportunity came temptation: the temptation of subduing the Kingdom of God, which is not of this world, to the categories of the kingdom of this world, which lies in evil. But temptation exists in order to be overcome: there is no inevitability in succumbing to it. And so while Western Europe succumbed to the temptation of secular power and secular political philosophy, making the Church first into a form of theocratic absolutist monarchy under the Pope, then a series of secular absolutist monarchies in the time of the Protestant Reformers, and finally a kind of confederation of secular democracies in our time, in the East the "symphonic"

ideal of Christian Rome remained: that is, the idea that the State can serve the Church, not by engulfing her or being engulfed by her, and still less by separating itself completely from her sanctifying influence in a rigid separation of powers, but by protecting her against her external enemies as "the guardian of the ark", by helping to enforce her decrees in public life through godly legislation, and by providing, in the person of the Christian Emperor, a focus of unity for Christendom as a whole.

The Christian Roman Empire, with its capital in the "New Rome" of Constantinople, carried out this task for over a thousand years before it fell to the Muslims in 1453. The Empire failed because, while emperor and patriarch remained in harmony to the end, this harmony was not true "symphony", but an agreement to put the interests of the nation-state above those of the Ecumenical Church. As an 8th or 9th Greek prophecy recently found in St. Sabbas' monastery near Jerusalem put it: "The sceptre of the Orthodox kingdom will fall from the weakening hands of the Byzantine emperors, *since they will not have proved able to achieve the symphony of Church and State*. Therefore the Lord in His Providence will send a third God-chosen people to take the place of the chosen, but spiritually decrepit people of the Greeks." That third God-chosen people was the Russians, and in time Russia became "the Third Rome", the main protector of Orthodoxy throughout the world…

At the beginning of the period studied in this book Russia had grown to become the largest and most diverse land empire in world history. It protected not only the 100 million Orthodox Christians within the empire itself: it also worked actively on behalf of the millions more Orthodox Christians in Eastern Europe and the Middle East, and supported important missions in Persia, China, Japan and North America. Moreover, Russia, as Marx and Engels recognized, was the main fortress against the revolution that threatened every government, and every Christian community, throughout the world.

The tragedy of the Russian revolution is the tragedy of how the main earthly protector of Christianity and legitimate government was destroyed and transformed into their greatest persecutor because of the sins of the people – and in particular the sin of not valuing the Russian Tsarist and Orthodox Homeland as "the threshold of the Heavenly Fatherland", in St. John of Kronstadt's words…

"And so," wrote Archbishop Averky (Taushev) of Syracuse and Jordanville, "there appeared the third, most important stage in the 'apostasy' which is now developing so quickly in front of our eyes – the bloody catastrophe which came upon our unfortunate homeland of Russia in 1917. Carried out in accordance with the example of 'the Great French Revolution'

of 1789, our Russian revolution can, with all justice, be looked upon as the greatest achievement of the servants of the coming Antichrist. In the person of Orthodox Russia, the chief obstacle on the path of the victoriously progressing, God-permitted 'apostasy' was destroyed: there remained no strong fortress of the true Orthodox Faith and Church in the world, and the Antichrist, in the person of his servants, began, according to the expression of our native interpreter of the apostolic epistles, the holy hierarch Theophan the recluse of Vishna, 'to expand his operations'.

"Since then, as we see now, the apostasy has gone forward by gigantic strides, without meeting any serious impediments."

Indeed, we are still far from "the end of history", as liberal commentators understand it – that is, the end of totalitarian tyranny and its replacement by global liberal capitalism. Communism still lives, and it lives largely because the lessons of the Russian revolution have still not been learned. For how, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn said, can we go forward to a better future if we have not learned the lessons of the past? Hence the vital importance of a thorough and deep study of the event that gave totalitarian evil its decisive breakthrough – the Russian revolution.

PART I. THE GENDARME OF EUROPE (1825-1855)

But as for Me, I was established as king by Him, upon Sion, His holy mountain, proclaiming the commandment of the Lord.

Psalm 2.6.

1. THE DECEMBRIST REBELLION

Russia's victory over Napoleon in 1812 was not only a great military triumph. It also rekindled the religious and national consciousness of the people. Orlando Figes writes: "As readers of *War and Peace* will know, the war of 1812 was a vital watershed in the culture of the Russian aristocracy. It was a war of national liberation from the intellectual empire of the French – a moment when noblemen like the Rostovs and the Bolkonskys struggled to break free from the foreign conventions of their society and began new lives on Russian principles. This was no straightforward metamorphosis (and it happened much more slowly than in Tolstoy's novel, where the nobles rediscover their forgotten national ways almost overnight). Though anti-French voices had grown to quite a chorus in the first decade of the nineteenth century, the aristocracy was still immersed in the culture of the country against which they were at war. The salons of St. Petersburg were filled with young admirers of Bonaparte, such as Pierre Bezhukhov in *War and Peace.* The most fashionable set was that of Counts Rumiantsev and Caulaincourt, the French ambassador in Petersburg, the circle in which Tolstoy's Hélène moved. 'How can we fight the French?' asks Count Rostopchin, the Governor of Moscow, in *War and Peace*. 'Can we arm ourselves against our teachers and divinities? Look at our youths! Look at our ladies! The French are our gods. Paris is our Kingdom of Heaven.' Yet even in these circles there was horror at Napoleon's invasion, and their reaction against all things French formed the basis of a Russian renaissance in life and art."

The problem was: there might be a Russian renaissance in life and art, but Paris still remained the Kingdom of Heaven for many Russian aristocrats – especially those who accompanied Tsar Alexander on his triumphal entry into Paris in 1814. For they came back inoculated with another dose of the revolutionary French virus, with the ideas of liberty, equality and fraternity and the wickedness of monarchical rule. For, as Adam Zamoyski writes, "if nobles at home wanted to keep their serfs, the nobles who served as officers in the armies that occupied Paris were exposed to other, liberal influences. They had been brought up speaking French and reading the same literature as educated people in other countries. They could converse effortlessly with German and English allies as well as with French prisoners and civilians. Ostensibly, they were just like any of the Frenchmen, Britons and Germans they met, yet at every step they were made aware of profound differences. The experience left them with a sense of being somehow outside, almost unfit for participation in European civilisation. And that feeling would have dire consequences…"

The fate of Russia over the next century would depend on which tendency in Russian life gained the upper hand: the Orthodox Christian ideal, or the liberal-revolutionary ideal…

*

The Decembrist rebellion was the last stage in a wave of revolutionary violence that rolled through several countries in Southern Europe, reaching Russia after the supposed death of Tsar Alexander I on November 19, 1825. In actual fact, the tsar, renouncing his youthful liberal and Masonic beliefs, and wholeheartedly embracing the Orthodox faith, had staged his death and become a monk in Siberia. For, as he said, "The burning of Moscow [in 1812] enlightened my soul, and the judgement of God on the icy fields filled my heart with a warmth of faith such as I had not felt before. Then I came to know God as He is depicted in the Holy Scriptures. I am obliged to the redemption of Europe from destruction for my own redemption."

As Monk Abel had prophesied about him during his father's reign: "Under him the French will burn down Moscow, but he will take Paris from them and will be called the Blessed. But his tsar's crown will be heavy for him, and he will change the exploit of service as tsar for the exploit of fasting and prayer. And he will be righteous in God's eyes."

During the interregnum after Alexander's supposed death, on December 14, a group of army officers attempted to seize power in St. Petersburg. Already in 1823 Alexander I had been given a list of the future "Decembrists". But he refused to act against them. Archpriest Lev Lebedev explains why: "'It is not for me to punish them,' said his Majesty, and cast the paper into the fire. 'I myself shared their views in my youth,' he added. That means that now, in 1823, Alexander I evaluated these diversions of his youth *as sin*, which also had to receive their retribution. Neither he nor [Grand Duke] Constantine [his brother] *had the spiritual, moral right to punish* the plotters, insofar as both of them had been guilty of *the plot* against their own father! That was the essence of the matter! Only he had the right *to punish* who had in no way been involved in the parricide and the revolutionary delusions – that is, the younger brother *Nicholas*. It was to him that the reins of the government of Russia were handed."

The Decembrist conspirators were divided into a Northern Society based in St. Petersburg and a Southern society based in Tulchin, headquarters of the Second Army in the Ukraine. "In the ideology of the Northern Society especially," writes Andrzej Walicki, "there were certain elements reminiscent of the views of the aristocratic opposition of the reign of Catherine II. Many of the members in this branch of the Decembrist movement were descendants of

once powerful and now impoverished boyar families… Nikita Muraviev claimed that the movement was rooted in the traditions of Novgorod and Pskov, of the twelfth-century Boyar Duma, of the constitutional demands presented to Anne by the Moscow nobility in 1730, and of the eighteenth-century aristocratic opposition. The poet Kondraty Ryleev painted an idealized portrait of Prince Andrei Kurbsky (the leader of the boyar revolt against Ivan the Terrible) and even devoted one of his 'elegies' to him…In his evidence before the Investigating Commission after the suppression of the revolt, Petr Kakhovsky stated that the movement was primarily a response to the high-handedness of the bureaucracy, the lack of respect for ancient gentry freedom, and the favoritism shown to foreigners. Another Northern Decembrist, the writer and literary critic Aleksandr Bestuzhev… wrote that his aim was 'monarchy tempered by aristocracy'. These and similar facts explain Pushkin's view, expressed in the 1830's, that the Decembrist revolt had been the last episode in the age-old struggle between autocracy and boyars…

"The Decembrists used the term 'republic' loosely, without appearing to be fully aware that there were essential differences between, for instance, the Roman republic, the Polish gentry republic, the old Russian city states, and modern bourgeois republics… Muraviev modelled his plan for a political system on the United States… The theorists of the Northern Society made no distinction between criticism of absolutism from the standpoint of the gentry and similar criticism from a bourgeois point of view. Hence they saw no difficulty in reconciling liberal notions taken largely from the works of Bentham, Benjamin Constant and Adam Smith with an idealization of former feudal liberties and a belief in the role of the aristocracy as a 'curb on despotism'. The theoretical premise here was the 'juridical world view' of the Enlightenment, according to which legal and political forms determined the revolution of society."

The Northern Decembrists were in favour of the emancipation of the serfs. However, they insisted that the land should remain with the gentry, thereby ensuring the continued dependence of the serfs on the gentry. "The conviction that the peasants ought to be overjoyed merely at the abolition of serfdom was shared by many Decembrists. Yakushkin, for instance, could not conceal his exasperation at his peasants' demand for land when he offered to free them. When they were told that the land would remain the property of the landlord, their answer was: 'Then things had better stay as they were. We belong to the master, but the land belongs to us.'"

The Northern Decembrists worked out a new interpretation of Russian history conceived "as an antithesis to Karamzin's theory of the beneficial role of autocracy". "An innate Russian characteristic, the Decembrists

maintained – one that later developments had blunted but not destroyed – was a deep-rooted love of liberty. Autocracy had been unknown in Kievan Russia: the powers of the princes had been strictly circumscribed there and decisions on important affairs of state were taken by the popular assemblies. The Decembrists were especially ardent admirers of the republican city-states of Novgorod and Pskov. This enthusiasm was of practical significance, since they were convinced that the 'spirit of liberty' that had once imbued their forbears was still alive; let us but strike the bell, and the people of Novgorod, who have remained unchanged throughout the centuries, will assemble by the bell tower, Ryleev declared. Kakhovsky described the peasant communes with their self-governing *mir* as 'tiny republics', a living survival of Russian liberty. In keeping with this conception, the Decembrists thought of themselves as *restoring* liberty and bringing back a form of government that had sound historical precedents."

This reinterpretation of Russian history was false. Russia was imbued from the beginning with the spirit of Orthodox autocracy: the "republics" of Pskov and Novgorod were exceptions to the historical rule. And if Kievan autocracy was less powerful than the Muscovite or Petersburg autocracies, this was not necessarily to its advantage. Russia succumbed to the Mongols because of the dividedness of her princes. She prospered when autocracy was restored in her.

In his draft for a constitution, *Russian Justice*, the leader of the Southern Society, Colonel Pavel Pestel, based his thought on two assumptions: "that every man has a natural right to exist and thus to a piece of land large enough to allow him to make a basic living; and that only those who create surplus wealth have a right to enjoy it. After the overthrow of tsarism, therefore, Pestel proposed to divide land into two equal sectors: the first would be public property (or, more accurately, the property of the communes); the second would be in private hands. The first would be used to ensure everyone a minimum living, whereas the second would be used to create surplus wealth. Every citizen was entitled to ask his commune for an allotment large enough to support a family; if the commune had more land available, he would even be able to demand several such allotments. The other sector would remain in private hands. Pestel felt that his program ensured every individual a form of social welfare in the shape of a communal land allotment but also left scope for unlimited initiative and the opportunity of making a fortune in the private sector.

"Pestel believed that his program had every chance of success since land ownership in Russia had traditionally been both communal and private. Here he obviously had in mind the Russian village commune; it should be emphasized, however, that Pestel's commune differed essentially from the

feudal obshchina in that it did not restrict its members' movement or personal freedom and did not impose collective responsibility for individual members' tax liabilities."

The Decembrist rebellion was crushed through the courage of the future Tsar Nicholas I. On the investigation committee into the crimes of the conspirators he placed Count Alexander Khristoforovich Benckendorff, future head of the Gendarmes and secret police. At the first interrogation Benckendorff gathered all the accused and said to them: "You affirm that you rebelled for the sake of freedom for the serfs? Very praiseworthy. I ask those of you who gave this same freedom to the serfs – who did not cast them out on the street to die as homeless dogs, their heads under a fence, but released them from the land while helping them to relocate – to raise your hands. If there are such people among you, then their case will be shelved, since they have truly acted in accordance with their own conscience. I'm waiting. Nobody? How strange…

"I released my serfs in Lithuania in 1816, and those in Tambov in 1818. They all left the land with funds to make a new start. I paid the taxes of each one of them for five years in advance to the state purse. And I do not consider myself to be a liberal or liberator! It's more advantageous to me this way. These people work better for themselves. I earn on grinding and timber-felling – and from my former serfs. I have already covered all their expenses and made a profit on all that. And I don't come out onto the square with ready-made declarations and protests against his Majesty or, even less, the Empire! And so there is no way you can prove that this affair is political. We will judge you as rebels and traitors of the Fatherland like Emelyan Pugachev. And now, all of you, to your cells! You will go on the same convoy with the criminals, you swine!"

579 people were arrested and brought to trial. 40 were given the death sentence and the rest – hard labour. In the end only five were executed (by hanging). The soldiers were flogged. In August, 1826 Tsar Nicholas confirmed the ban on Masonry.

"And so *for the first time* in Russian history," writes Lebedev, "a rebellion of the nobility had as its aim not the removal of one sovereign by another, but the annihilation of tsarist power altogether… It became clear that [the Decembrists'] links in 'society' were so significant and deep, and the sympathy for them so broad, that one could speak of a betrayal of the Throne and Church – or, at any rate, of the unreliability – *of the noble class as a whole*."

V.F. Ivanov writes: "As an eyewitness put it, the rebellion in Petersburg shocked the general mass of the population of Russia profoundly. In his

words, 'the attempt to limit the Tsar's power and change the form of government seemed to us not only sacrilege, but an historical anomaly; while the people, seeing that the plotters belonged exclusively to the upper class, considered the nobility to be traitors, and this added one more sharp feature to that secret hatred which it nourished towards the landowners. Only the progressives and the intelligentsia of the capital sympathized with the unfortunate madmen' (Schilder).

"The best people turned away from the affair in disgust and branded the work of the Mason-Decembrists that of Cain. In the words of Karamzin: 'Look at the stupid story of our mad liberals! Pray God that not so many real rogues are found among them. The soldiers were only victims of a deception. Sometimes a fine day begins with a storm: may it be thus in the new reign… God saved us from a great disaster on December 14…'"

In 1826 Karamzin wrote: "Liberals! What do you want? The happiness of men? But is there happiness where there is death, illness, vices, passions?… For a moral being there is no good without freedom: but this freedom is given not by his Majesty, not by Parliament, but by each of us to ourselves, with the help of God. We must conquer freedom in our hearts by peace of conscience and trust in Providence!" And in the same year Metropolitan Philaret said: "It is becoming clearer and clearer from what horrors and iniquities God delivered us, when he strengthened His Majesty on December 14. Pray that this evil will be completely annihilated by righteousness and wisdom."

The Decembrist rebellion was important not only for what it represented in itself but also for the halo of martyrdom which its exiles acquired. Not that they were hardened revolutionaries of the Leninist type: they were naive, romantic dreamers, one of whom, the poet Ryleev, mounted the scaffold with a volume of Byron in his hands, and another, Count Sergius Volkonsky, remained a monarchist to the end of his life, breaking down in tears on hearing of the death of Nicholas I. But this did make their example any the less dangerous… As the famous Slavophile, Alexis Stepanovich Khomyakov said, they "preferred the tyranny of an armed minority to one-man rule". And their naivety did not diminish the evil effect of their words and deeds on succeeding generations: from now on, Russian liberals and revolutionaries could appeal to the example of the "heroic" Decembrists in their struggle against the Orthodox autocracy…

Consequently, as Sebag Sebastian Montefiore writes, "seeing the Decembrists as a symptom of European plot against monarchy and religion," Tsar Nicholas "saw his life's work as essentially defensive."

2. ST. SERAPHIM OF SAROV

In 1825, a young officer inoculated with the revolutionary virus came up to a hermit in the great woods of Sarov, probably the greatest bearer of the Orthodox ideal in the nineteenth century, St. Seraphim of Sarov. The officer, writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "taking off his cap, asked for his blessing. The always meek and quiet elder Seraphim was suddenly filled with such anger as nobody had ever seen in him. He began to shout loudly at the officer and cursed him. The unfortunate one, struck as if by thunder, went away, swaying from the shock and forgetting to put on his cap… An involuntary witness of the event had been a young monk who had brought Elder Seraphim some food. 'Did you see?' the elder asked him. 'I saw,' replied the monk. The elder pointed at the source, which he had so carefully tended: 'Look!' The monk glanced and saw that the source of grace-filled water, which had healed many sick people, and which was always clean and transparent, this time had become completely disturbed. 'That's how these gentlemen want to disturb Russia,' said St. Seraphim. Soon Russia learned of the plot and the attempt at rebellion of the 'Decembrists' (the officer was one of them)…"

In 1844 Nicholas Alexandrovich Motovilov, a nobleman of Simbirsk province and a close friend of the saint, made notes of his conversations with him. At the beginning of the twentieth century Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus found these notes and published them as follows:-

"… As a demonstration of true zeal for God Batyushka Seraphim cited the holy Prophet Elijah and Gideon, and for hours at a time he talked in an inspired manner about them. Every judgement that he made about them was concluded by its application to life, precisely our own life, and with an indication of how we… can draw soul-saving instructions from their lives. He often spoke to me about the holy King, Prophet and Ancestor of God David, at which point he went into an extraordinary spiritual rapture. How one had to see him during those unearthly minutes! His face, inspired by the grace of the Holy Spirit, shone like the sun, and I – I speak the truth – on looking at him felt in my eyes as if I was looking at the sun. I involuntarily recalled the face of Moses when he had just come down from Sinai. My soul, pacified, entered such a quiet, and was filled with such great joy, that my heart was ready to embrace within itself not only the whole human race, but also the whole creation of God, pouring out in love towards everything that is of God…

"'So, your Godbelovedness, so,' Batyushka used to say, leaping from joy (those who still remember this holy elder will relate how he would sometimes be seen leaping from joy), '"I have chosen David my servant, a man after My

own heart, who will do all My will"'…

"In explaining how good it was to serve the Tsar and how much his life should be held dear, he gave as an example Abishai, David's war-commander.

"'Once,' said Batyushka Seraphim, 'to satisfy the thirst of David, he stole in to a spring in view of the enemy camp and got water, and, in spite of a cloud of arrows released at him from the enemy camp, returned to him completely unharmed, bringing the water in his helmet. He had been saved from the cloud of arrows only because of his zeal towards the King. But when David gave an order, Abishai replied: "Only command, O King, and everything will be done in accordance with your will." But when the King expressed the desire to take part himself in some bloody deed to encourage his warriors, Abishai besought him to preserve his health and, stopping him from participating in the battle, said: "There are many of us, your Majesty, but you are one among us. Even if all of us were killed, as long as you were alive, Israel would be whole and unconquered. But if you are gone, then what will become of Israel?"…'

"Batyushka Fr. Seraphim loved to explain himself at length, praising the zeal and ardour of faithful subjects to the Tsar, and desiring to explain more clearly how these two Christian virtues are pleasing to God, he said:

"'After Orthodoxy, these are our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety.'

"Often from David he changed the subject to our great Emperor [Nicholas I] and for hours at a time talked to me about him and about the Russian kingdom, bewailing those who plotted evil against his August Person. Clearly revealing to me what they wanted to do, he led me into a state of horror; while speaking about the punishment prepared for them from the Lord, and in confirmation of his words, he added:

"'This will happen without fail: the Lord, seeing the impenitent spite of their hearts, will permit their undertakings to come to pass for a short period, but their illness will turn upon their heads, and the unrighteousness of their destructive plots will descend upon them. The Russian land will be reddened with streams of blood, and many noblemen will be killed for his great Majesty and the integrity of his Autocracy: but the Lord will not be wrath to the end, and will not allow the Russian land to be destroyed to the end, because in it alone will Orthodoxy and the remnants of Christian piety be especially preserved.

"Once," as Motovilov continued in his notes, "I was in great sorrow, thinking what would happen in the future with our Orthodox Church if the evil contemporary to us would be multiplied more and more. And being convinced that our Church was in an extremely pitiful state both from the great amount of carnal debauchery and… from the spiritual impiety of godless opinions sown everywhere by the most recent false teachers, I very much wanted to know what Batyushka Seraphim would tell me about this.

"Discussing the holy Prophet Elijah in detail, he said in reply to my question, among other things, the following:

"'Elijah the Thesbite complained to the Lord about Israel as if it had wholly bowed the knee to Baal, and said in prayer that only he, Elijah, had remained faithful to Lord, but now they were seeking his soul, too, to take it… So what, batyushka, did the Lord reply to this? "I have left seven thousand men in Israel who have not bowed the knee to Baal." So if in the kingdom of Israel, which had fallen away from the kingdom of Judah that was faithful to God, and had come to a state of complete corruption, there still remained seven thousand men faithful to the Lord, then what shall we say about Russia? I think that at that time there were no more than three million in the kingdom of Israel at that time. And how many do we have in Russia now, batyushka?'

"I replied: 'About sixty million.'

"And he continued: 'Twenty times more. Judge for yourself how many more of those faithful to God that brings!… So, batyushka, those whom He foreknew, He also predestined; and those whom He predestined, He also called; and those whom He called, He guards, and those He also glorifies… So what is there for us to be despondent about!… God is with us! He who hopes in the Lord is as Mount Sion, and the Lord is round about His people… The Lord will keep you, the Lord will protect you on your right hand, the Lord will preserve your coming in and your going out now and to the ages; by day the sun will not burn you, nor the moon by night.'

"And when I asked him what this meant, and to what end he was talking to me about it:

"'To the end,' replied Batyushka Fr. Seraphim, 'that you should know that in this way the Lord guards His people as the apple of His eye, that is, the Orthodox Christians, who love Him and with all their heart, and all their mind, in word and deed, day and night serve Him. And such are those who completely observe all the commandments, dogmas and traditions of our Eastern Universal Church, and confess the piety handed down by it with their lips, and really, in all the circumstances of life, act according to the holy

commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ.'

"In confirmation of the fact that there were still many in the Russian land who remained faithful to our Lord Jesus Christ, who lived in Orthodoxy and piety, batyushka Fr. Seraphim once said to one acquaintance of mine… that once, when he was in the Spirit, he saw the whole land of Russia, and it was filled and as it were covered with the smoke of the prayers of believers praying to the Lord…"

St. Seraphim prophesied: "More than half a century will pass. Then evildoers will raise their heads high. This will happen without fail: the Lord, seeing the impenitent evil of their hearts, will allow their enterprises for a short time. But their sickness will rebound upon their own heads, and the unrighteousness of their destructive plots will fall upon them. The Russian land will become red with rivers of blood... Before the birth of the Antichrist there will be a great, protracted war and a terrible revolution in Russia passing all bounds of human imagination, for the bloodletting will be most terrible: the rebellions of Ryazan, Pugachev and the French revolution will be nothing in comparison with what will take place in Russia. Many people who are faithful to the fatherland will perish, church property and the monasteries will be robbed; the Lord's churches will be desecrated; good rich people will be robbed and killed, rivers of Russian blood will flow…"

3. THE ST. PETERSBURG AUTOCRACY

The Russian Empire in the middle of the nineteenth century was an extraordinary phenomenon, viewed with astonishment by friends and foes alike. On the one hand, it was the greatest Christian empire in the whole of the "Constantinian" phase of Church history (312-1917), with the largest land-mass, the largest population and the largest armies, whose influence extended still further beyond its boundaries not only through its flourishing Church missions but also through the protection it afforded the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans and the Middle East who were living under the infidel Turkish yoke. On the other hand, it was viewed with fear and loathing by most of Catholic and Protestant Europe, who saw in it the incarnation of backwardness, tyranny and oppression. Tsar Alexander I (1801-25) had defeated Napoleon, and his brother Nicholas I (1825-55) had driven the Turks out of most of Greece, subdued the Poles and suppressed the Hungarian revolutionaries in 1848. The crowned heads of Western and Central Europe – the King of Prussia and the Emperor of Austria-Hungary - should have been grateful to the Tsar for keeping them on their thrones. But they were not. They viewed his role of protector of the Orthodox Christians and Christian Holy Places of the Ottoman Empire with suspicion, and challenged it by aiding and abetting the invasion of Crimea by Britain, France and Turkey in 1854. As far as the West was concerned, they preferred "the sick man of Europe", the Turkish Sultan, though he was an infidel and a persecutor of Christians, to "the gendarme of Europe", the Russian tsar, though he was the most Christian emperor who stood virtually alone between Europe and the horrors of the proletarian revolution…

The Tsar had enemies at home as well as abroad. He should naturally have relied on the aristocratic class, whose wealth and position depended entirely on him. But the officers' Decembrist rebellion had shown that this class was riddled with Masonry and liberalism. A more reliable support was the Orthodox Church; and great saints such as Seraphim of Sarov and Theophilus of the Kiev Caves testified that his work was pleasing to God and that all Russian Christians should obey him. The Autocracy was especially well defended by Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), a great theologian and defender of the Church who had ruled the see of Moscow for nearly half a century. During the Decembrist rebellion his wise refusal to reveal the contents of Tsar Alexander's will immediately helped to guarantee the transfer of power to his brother, Tsar Nicholas I. Therefore his views on the Autocracy, and on the relationship between the Church and the State, were particularly important. Indeed, according to Robert Nicols, it is perhaps Philaret, who "should be credited with the first efforts [in the Russian

Church] to work out a theory of church-state relations that insisted on the legitimacy of divinely instituted royal authority without endorsing the seemingly unlimited claims of the modern state to administer all aspects of the lives of its citizens."

According to Metropolitan Ioann (Snychev), Metropolitan Philaret said that "it was necessary for there to be a close union between the ruler and the people - a union, moreover, that was based exclusively on righteousness. The external expression of the prosperity of a state was the complete submission of the people to the government. The government in a state had to enjoy the rights of complete inviolability on the part of the subjects. And if it was deprived of these rights, the state could not be firm, it was threatened with danger insofar as two opposing forces would appear: self-will on the part of the subjects and predominance on the part of the government. 'If the government is not firm,' taught Philaret, 'then the state also is not firm. Such a state is like a city built on a volcanic mountain: what does its firmness signify when beneath it is concealed a force which can turn it into ruins at any minute? Subjects who do not recognize the sacred inviolability of the rulers are incited by hope of self-will to attain self-will; an authority which is not convinced of its inviolability is incited by worries about its security to attain predominance; in such a situation the state wavers between the extremes of self-will and predominance, between the horrors of anarchy and repression, and cannot affirm in itself obedient freedom, which is the focus and soul of social life.'

"The holy hierarch understood the rebellion [of the Decembrists] as being against the State, against itself. 'Subjects can themselves understand,' said Philaret, 'that in destroying the authorities they are destroying the constitution of society and consequently they are themselves destroying themselves.'"

Philaret "did not doubt that monarchical rule is 'power from God' (Romans 13.1) in its significance for Russian history and statehood, and more than once in his sermons expressed the most submissively loyal feelings with regard to all the representatives of the Royal Family. But he was one of the very few archpastors who had the courage to resist the tendency - very characteristic of Russian conditions - to reduce Orthodoxy to 'glorification of the tsar'. Thus, contrary to many hierarchs, who from feelings of servility warmly accepted Nicholas I's attempt to introduce the heir among the members of the Synod, he justly saw in this a manifestation of caesaropapism..., and in the application of attributes of the Heavenly King to the earthly king - a most dangerous deformation of religious consciousness..., and in such phenomena as the passing of a cross procession around statues of the emperor - a direct return to paganism."

Metropolitan Philaret, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes, "distinctly and firmly reminded people of the Church's independence and freedom, reminded them of the limits of the state. And in this he sharply and irreconcilably parted with his epoch, with the whole of the State's self-definition in the new, Petersburgian Russia. Philaret was very reserved and quiet when speaking. By his intense and courageous silence he with difficulty concealed and subdued his anxiety about what was happening. Through the vanity and confusion of events he saw and made out the threatening signs of the righteous wrath of God that was bound to come. Evil days, days of judgement were coming - 'it seems that we are already living in the suburbs of Babylon, if not in Babylon itself,' he feared... 'My soul is sorrowful,' admitted Metropolitan Philaret once. 'It seems to me that the judgement which begins at the house of God is being more and more revealed... How thickly does the smoke come from the coldness of the abyss and how high does it mount'... And only in repentance did he see an exit, in universal repentance 'for many things, especially in recent years'.

"Philaret had his own theory of the State, of the sacred kingdom. And in it there was not, and could not be, any place for the principles of state supremacy. It is precisely because the powers that be are from God, and the sovereigns rule by the mercy of God, that the kingdom has a completely subject and auxiliary character. 'The State as State is not subject to the Church', and therefore the servants of the Church already in the apostolic canons are strictly forbidden 'to take part in the administration of the people'. Not from outside, but from within must the Christian State be bound by the law of God and the ecclesiastical order. In the mind of Metropolitan Philaret, the State is a moral union, 'a union of free moral beings' and a union founded on mutual service and love - 'a certain part of the general dominion of the Almighty, outwardly separate, but by an invisible power yoked into the unity of the whole'... And the foundation of power lies in the principle of service. In the Christian State Philaret saw the Anointed of God, and before this banner of God's good will he with good grace inclined his head. '*The Sovereign receives the whole of his lawfulness from the Church's anointing*', that is, in the Church and through the Church. Here the Kingdom inclines its head before the Priesthood and takes upon itself the vow of service to the Church, and its right to take part in ecclesiastical affairs. He possesses this not by virtue of his autocracy and authority, but precisely by virtue of his obedience and vow. This right does not extend or pass to the organs of state administration, and between the Sovereign and the Church there cannot and must not be any dividing wall or mediation. The Sovereign is anointed, but not the State. The Sovereign enters into the Church, but the State as such remains outside the Church. And for that reason it has no rights and privileges in the Church. In her inner constitution the Church is completely independent, and has no need

of the help or defence of the secular authorities - 'the altar does not fear to fall even without this protection'. For the Church is ruled by Christ Himself, Who distributes and realizes 'his own episcopacy of souls' through the apostolic hierarchy, which 'is not similar to any form of secular rule'.

"The Church has her own inviolable code of laws, her own strength and privileges, which exceed all earthly measures. 'In His word Jesus Christ did not outline for her a detailed and uniform statute, so that His Kingdom should not seem to be of this world'... The Church has her own special form of action - in prayer, in the service of the sacraments, in exhortation and in pastoral care. And for real influence on public life, for its real enchurchment, according to Metropolitan Philaret's thought, the interference of the hierarchy in secular affairs is quite unnecessary - 'it is necessary not so much that a bishop should sit in the governmental assembly of grandees, as that the grandees and men of nobles birth should more frequently and ardently surround the altar of the Lord together with the bishop'... Metropolitan Philaret always with great definiteness drew a firm line between the state and ecclesiastical orders. Of course, he did not demand and did not desire the separation of the State from the Church, its departure from the Church into the arbitrariness of secular vanity. But at the same time he always sharply underlined the complete heterogeneity and particularity of the State and the Church. The Church cannot be in the State, and the State cannot be in the Church - 'unity and harmony' must be realized between them in the unity of the creative realization of God's commandments.

"It is not difficult to understand how distant and foreign this way of thinking was for the State functionaries of the Nicolaitan spirit and time, and how demanding and childish it seemed to them. Philaret did not believe in the power of rebukes and reprimands. He did not attach great significance to the external forms of life - 'it is not some kind of transformation that is needed, but a choice of men and supervision', he used to say. And above all what was necessary was an inner creative uplift, a gathering and renewal of spiritual forces. What was needed was an intensification of creative activity, a strengthening and intensification of ecclesiastical and pastoral freedom. As a counterweight to the onslaught of the State, Metropolitan Philaret thought about the reestablishment of the living unity of the local episcopate, which would be realized in constant consultative communion of fellow pastors and bishops, and strengthened at times by small congresses and councils, until a general local Council would become inwardly possible and achievable. Metropolitan Philaret always emphasized that 'we live in the Church militant'... And with sadness he recognized that 'the quantity of sins and carelessnesses which have mounted up in the course of more than one century almost exceeds the strength and means of correction'... Philaret was not a man of struggle, and was weighed down 'by remaining in the chatter and cares of

the city and works of men'. He lived in expectation 'of that eternally secure city, from which it will not be necessary to flee into any desert', He wanted to withdraw, to run away, and beyond the storm of affairs to pray for the mercy and longsuffering of God, for 'defence from on high'."

The State was "a union of free moral beings, united amongst themselves with the sacrifice of part of their freedom for the preservation and confirmation by the common forces of the law of morality, which constitutes the necessity of their existence. The civil laws are nothing other than interpretations of this law in application to particular cases and guards placed against its violation."

Philaret emphasized the rootedness of the State in the family, with the State deriving its essential properties and structure from the family: "The family is older than the State. Man, husband, wife, father, son, mother, daughter and the obligations and virtues inherent in these names existed before the family grew into the nation and the State was formed. That is why family life in relation to State life can be figuratively depicted as the root of the tree. In order that the tree should bear leaves and flowers and fruit, it is necessary that the root should be strong and bring pure juice to the tree. In order that State life should develop strongly and correctly, flourish with education, and bring forth the fruit of public prosperity, it is necessary that family life should be strong with the blessed love of the spouses, the sacred authority of the parents, and the reverence and obedience of the children, and that as a consequence of this, from the pure elements of family there should arise similarly pure principles of State life, so that with veneration for one's father veneration for the tsar should be born and grow, and that the love of children for their mother should be a preparation of love for the fatherland, and the simple-hearted obedience of domestics should prepare and direct the way to self-sacrifice and self-forgetfulness in obedience to the laws and sacred authority of the autocrat."

If the foundation of the State is the family, and each family is both a miniature State and a miniature monarchy, it follows that the most natural form of Statehood is Monarchy - more specifically, a Monarchy that is in union with, as owing its origin to, the Heavenly Monarch, God. Despotic monarchies identify themselves, rather than unite themselves, with the Deity, so they cannot be said to correspond to the Divine order of things. In ancient times, the only monarchy that was in accordance with the order and the command of God was the Israelite autocracy. The Russian autocracy was the successor of the Israelite autocracy, was based on the same principles and received the same blessing from God.

In 1851, Metropolitan Philaret preached as follows: "As heaven is indisputably better than the earth, and the heavenly than the earthly, it is

similarly indisputable that the best on earth must be recognised to be that which was built on it in the image of the heavenly, as was said to the God-seer Moses: 'Look thou that thou make them after their pattern, which was showed thee in the mount' (Exodus 25.40). In accordance with this, God established a king on earth in the image of His single rule in the heavens; He arranged for an autocratic king on earth in the image of His almighty power; and He placed an hereditary king on earth in the image of His imperishable Kingdom, which lasts from ages to ages.

"Oh if only all the kings of the earth paid sufficient attention to their heavenly dignity and to the traits of the image of the heavenly impressed upon them, and faithfully united the righteousness and goodness demanded of them, the heavenly unsleeping watchfulness, purity of thought and holiness of intention that is in God's image! Oh if only all the peoples sufficiently understood the heavenly dignity of the king and the construction of the heavenly kingdom in the image of the heavenly, and constantly signed themselves with the traits of that same image - by reverence and love for the king, by humble obedience to his laws and commands, by mutual agreement and unanimity, and removed from themselves everything of which there is no image in the heavens - arrogance, disputes, self-will, greediness and every evil thought, intention and act! Everything would be blessed in accordance with the heavenly image if it were well constructed in accordance with the heavenly image. All earthly kingdoms would be worthy of being the antechamber of the Heavenly Kingdom.

"Russia! You participate in this good more than many kingdoms and peoples. 'Hold on to that which thou hast, that no man take thy crown' (Revelation 3.11). Keep and continue to adorn your radiant crown, ceaselessly struggling to fulfil more perfectly the crown-giving commandments: 'Fear God, honour the king' (I Peter 2.17).

"Turning from the well-known to that which has perhaps been less examined and understood in the apostle's word, I direct our attention to that which the apostle, while teaching the fear of God, reverence for the king and obedience to the authorities, at the same time teaches about freedom: 'Submit', he says, 'to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake; whether to the king, as being supreme, or to governors as being sent through him... as free'. Submit as free men. Submit, and remain free...

"But how are we more correctly to understand and define freedom? Philosophy teaches that freedom is the capacity without restrictions rationally to choose and do that which is best, and that it is by nature the heritage of every man. What, it would seem, could be more desirable? But this teaching has its light on the summit of the contemplation of human nature, human

nature as it should be, while in descending to our experience and actions as they are in reality, it encounters darkness and obstacles.

"In the multiplicity of the race of men, are there many who have such an open and educated mind as faithfully to see and distinguish that which is best? And do those who see the best always have enough strength decisively to choose it and bring it to the level of action? Have we not heard complaints from the best of men: 'For to will is present in me, but how to perform that which is good I find not' (Romans 7.18)? What are we to say about the freedom of people who, although not in slavery to anybody, are nevertheless subject to sensuality, overcome by passion, possessed by evil habits? Is the avaricious man free? Is he not bound in golden chains? Is the indulger of his flesh free? Is he not bound, if not by cruel bonds, then by soft nets? Is the proud and vainglorious man free? Is he not chained, not by his hands, and not by his legs, but by his head and heart, to his own idol?

"Thus does not experience and consciousness, at least of some people in some cases, speak of that of which the Divine Scriptures speak generally: 'He who does sin is the servant of sin' (John 8. 34)?

"Observation of people and human societies shows that people who to a greater degree allow themselves to fall into this inner, moral slavery - slavery to sin, the passions and vices - are more often than others zealots for external freedom - freedom broadened as far as possible in human society before the law and the authorities. But will broadening external freedom help them to freedom from inner slavery? There is no reason to think that. With greater probability we must fear the opposite. He in whom sensuality, passion and vice has already acquired dominance, when the barriers put by the law and the authorities to his vicious actions have been removed, will of course give himself over to the satisfaction of his passions and lusts with even less restraint than before, and will use his external freedom only in order that he may immerse himself more deeply in inner slavery. Unhappy freedom which, as the Apostle explained, 'they have as a cover for their envy'! Let us bless the law and the authorities which, in decreeing and ordering and defending, as necessity requires, the limits placed upon freedom of action, hinder as far they can the abuse of natural freedom and the spread of moral slavery, that is, slavery to sin, the passions and the vices.

"I said: as far as they can, because we can not only not expect from the law and the earthly authorities a complete cutting off of the abuse of freedom and the raising of those immersed in the slavery of sin to the true and perfect freedom: even the law of the Heavenly Lawgiver is not sufficient for that. The law warns about sin, rebukes the sinner and condemns him, but does not communicate to the slave of sin the power to break the bonds of this slavery,

and does not provide the means of blotting out the iniquities committed, which lie on the conscience like a fiery seal of sinful slavery. And in this consists 'the weakness of the law' (Romans 8.3), to which the Apostle witnesses without a moment's hesitation.

"Here the question again presents itself: what is true freedom, and who can give it, and - especially - return it to the person who has lost it through sin? True freedom is the active capacity of the man who has not been enslaved to sin and who is not weighed down by a condemning conscience, to choose the best in the light of the truth of God and to realize it with the help of the power of God's grace.

"Only He Who gave this freedom to sinless man at his creation can give it back to the slave of sin. The Creator of freedom Himself declared this: 'If the Son will set you free, then you will truly be free' (John 8.36). 'If you remain in My words, you will truly be My disciples, and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free' (John 31.32). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, having suffered and died for us in the nature He received from us, by His 'Blood has cleansed our conscience from dead works' (Hebrews 9.14), and, having torn apart the bonds of death by His resurrection, has torn apart also the bonds of sin and death that bind us, and, after His ascension to heaven, has sent down the Spirit of truth, giving us through faith the light of His truth to see what is best, and His grace-filled power to do it.

"This is freedom, which is restrained neither by heaven, nor by the earth, nor by hell, which has as its limit the will of God, and this not to its own diminution, because it also strives to fulfil the will of God, which has no need to shake the lawful decrees of men because it is able to see in these the truth that 'the Kingdom is the Lord's and He Himself is sovereign of the nations' (Psalm 21.28), which in an unconstrained way venerates lawful human authority and its commands that are not contrary to God, insofar as it radiantly sees the truth that 'there is no power that is not of God, the powers that be are ordained of God' (Romans 13.1). And so this is freedom, which is in complete accord with obedience to the law and lawful authority, because it itself wishes for that which obedience demands…"

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The Autocracy's second line of defence was the conservative group of thinkers known as the Slavophiles. The Slavophiles defended traditional Orthodoxy, whereas the Westerners rejected it in favour either of a vague kind of ecumenist Christianity or (in the younger generation that came to maturity after the Crimean War) outright atheism. The Slavophiles defended the Autocracy, whereas the Westerners wanted it to be either gradually

phased out in favour of a liberal democratic constitution or violently destroyed through revolution. The Slavophiles defended the unique value of Russian civilization and popular institutions, especially during the Muscovite period before Peter the Great, whereas the Westerners saw Russian civilization as definitely backward and inferior to the West. The Slavophiles defended the Tsar's formulaic summary of traditional Russian values that became normative in his reign: *Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationhood*, whereas the Westerners rejected it fiercely.

Perhaps the first Slavophile was the great poet Alexander Pushkin, who in his youth had been a Westerner. He even admitted to the Tsar that he would have participated in the Decembrist rebellion if he had not been in exile. However, he was never a typical Westerner, and had read deeply in Karamzin's patriotic books on Russian history. This fact, together with the stabilizing experience of marriage and an enlightening interview with the Tsar himself, led Pushkin to a kind of conversion to Tsarist Russia and to a belief in her significance as a phenomenon independent of Europe.

The sincerity of his conversion was demonstrated during the Polish rebellion in 1830, when, just three weeks before the fall of Warsaw, Pushkin wrote "To the Slanderers of Russia". From that time, as the friend of the poet's brother, Michael Yuzefovich, wrote, "his world-view changed, completely and unalterably. He was already a deeply believing person: [he now became] a citizen who had changed his mind, having understood the demands of Russian life and renounced utopian illusions."

"Why is it necessary," wrote Pushkin, "that one of us [the tsar] should become higher than all and even higher than the law itself? Because the law is a tree, and in the law man hears something cruel and unfraternal. You don't get far with merely the literal fulfillment of the law: but none of us must break it or not fulfill it: for this a higher mercy softening the law is necessary. This can appear to men only in a fully-empowered authority. The state without a fully-empowered monarch is an automaton: many, if attains to what the United States has attained. But what is the United States? A corpse. In them man has disappeared to the point that he's not worth a brass farthing. A state without a fully-empowered monarch is the same as an orchestra without a conductor. However good the musicians, if there is not one among them who gives the beat with the movement of his baton, the concert gets nowhere…"

However, while in general supportive of the Autocracy, the Slavophiles, with the exception of Ivan Kireyevsky, had little *systematic* to say in defence of it. As Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov writes, "the greatest merit of the Slavophiles consisted not so much in their working out of a *political* teaching, as in establishing the *social* and *psychological* bases of public life." They were

not opposed to the autocracy; but the emphasis of their thought, especially Khomiakov's, was on *the people* rather than on the autocracy. Thus in Khomiakov we see the myth of an early pact between the Tsar and the people similar to the liberal myth of the social contract. For this was what the Slavophiles were above all concerned to emphasize: that the Tsar is not separated from his people, that Tsar and people form one harmonious whole and have a single ideal. As he wrote: "The people transferred to the Emperor all the power with which it itself was endowed in all its forms. The sovereign became the head of the people in Church matters as well as in matters of State administration. The people could not transfer to its Emperor rights that it did not itself have. It had from the beginning a voice in the election of its bishops, and this voice it could transfer to its Emperor. It had the right, or more precisely the obligation to watch that the decisions of its pastors and their councils were carried out – this right it could entrust to its chosen one and his successors. It had the right to defend its faith against every hostile attack upon it, - this right it could also transfer to its Sovereign. But the Church people did not have any power in questions of dogmatic teaching, and general Church piety – and for that reason it could not transfer such power to its Emperor."

Khomiakov was also concerned to emphasize that it was not the Tsar who ruled the Russian Orthodox Church, as the Fundamental Laws of the Russian Empire might have suggested. "'It is true,' he says, 'the expression "the head of the local church" has been used in the Laws of the Empire, but in a totally different sense than it is interpreted in other countries' (II, 351). The Russian Emperor has no rights of priesthood, he has no claims to infallibility or 'to any authority in matters of faith or even of church discipline'. He signs the decisions of the Holy Synod, but this right of proclaiming laws and putting them into execution is not the same as the right to formulate ecclesiastical laws. The Tsar has influence with regard to the appointment of bishops and members of the Synod, but it should be observed that such dependence upon secular power is frequently met with in many Catholic countries as well. In some of the Protestant states it is even greater (II, 36-38, 208)."

"The whole pathos of Slavophilism," writes Bishop Dionysius (Alferov), "lay in 'sobornost'', 'zemstvo', in 'the popular character of the monarchy, and not in its service as 'he who restrains [the coming of the Antichrist]'. Byzantium, in which there were neither Zemskie Sobory nor self-government of the land, elicited only irritation in them and was used by them to put in the shade the free 'Slavic element'. The Russian Tsar for the Slavophiles was first of all 'the people's Tsar', and not the Tsar of the Third Rome. According to the witness of Konstantin Leontiev, Tsar Nicholas Pavlovich himself noticed that under the Slavophiles' Russian caftan there stuck out the trousers of the most vulgar European democracy and liberalism."

This estimate is probably least true in relation to Ivan Sergeyevich Kireyevsky, although of all the Slavophiles he had the most problems with the Tsarist censor. At one point he was required to give an assurance to the minister of popular enlightenment that in his thinking he did not "separate the Tsar from Russia". Offended by the very suggestion, Kireyevsky proceeded to give one of the earliest and best justifications of the Autocracy in post-Petrine Russian history… He began from the fact that "the Russian man loves his Tsar. This reality cannot be doubted, because everyone can see and feel it. But love for the Tsar, like every love, can be true and false, good and bad – I am not speaking about feigned love. False love is that which loves in the Tsar only one's advantage; this love is base, harmful and, in dangerous moments, can turn to treachery. True love for the Tsar is united in one indivisible feeling with love for the Fatherland, for lawfulness and for the Holy Orthodox Church. Therefore this love can be magnanimous. And how can one separate in this matter love for the Tsar from the law, the Fatherland and the Church? The law is the will of the Tsar, proclaimed before the whole people; the Fatherland is the best love of his heart; the Holy Orthodox Church is his highest link with the people, it is the most essential basis of his power, the reason for the people's trust in him, the combination of his conscience with the Fatherland, the living junction of the mutual sympathy of the Tsar and the people, the basis of their common prosperity, the source of the blessing of God on him and on the Fatherland.

"But to love the Tsar separately from Russia means to love an external force, a chance power, but not the Russian Tsar: that is how the Old Ritualist schismatics and Balts love him, who were ready to serve Napoleon with the same devotion when they considered him stronger than Alexander. To love the Tsar and not to venerate the laws, or to break the laws given or confirmed by him under the cover of his trust, under the protection of his power, is to be his enemy under the mask of zeal, it is to undermine his might at the root, to destroy the Fatherland's love for him, to separate the people's concept of him from their concept of justice, order and general well-being – in a word, it is to separate the Tsar in the heart of the people from the very reasons for which Russia wishes to have a Tsar, from those good things in the hope of which she so highly venerates him. Finally, to love him without any relation to the Holy Church as a powerful Tsar, but not as the Orthodox Tsar, is to think that his rule is not the service of God and His Holy Church, but only the rule of the State for secular aims; it is to think that the advantage of the State can be separated from the advantage of Orthodoxy, or even that the Orthodox Church is a means, and not the end of the people's existence as a whole, that the Holy Church can be sometimes a hindrance and at other times a useful instrument for the Tsar's power. This is the love of a slave, and not that of a faithful subject; it is Austrian love, not Russian; this love for the Tsar is treason before Russia, and for the Tsar himself it is profoundly harmful, even

if sometimes seems convenient. Every counsel he receives from such a love bears within it a secret poison that eats away at the very living links that bind him with the Fatherland. For Orthodoxy is the soul of Russia, the root of the whole of her moral existence, the source of her might and strength, the standard gathering all the different kinds of feelings of her people into one stronghold, the earnest of all her hopes for the future, the treasury of the best memories of the past, her ruling object of worship, her heartfelt love. The people venerates the Tsar as the Church's support; and is so boundlessly devoted to him because it does not separate the Church from the Fatherland. All its trust in the Tsar is based on feeling for the Church. It sees in him a faithful director in State affairs only because it knows that he is a brother in the Church, who together with it serves her as the sincere son of the same mother and therefore can be a reliable shield of her external prosperity and independence…

"He who has not despaired of the destiny of his Fatherland cannot separate love for it from sincere devotion to Orthodoxy. And he who is Orthodox in his convictions cannot not love Russia, as the God-chosen vessel of His Holy Church on earth. Faith in the Church of God and love for Orthodox Russia are neither divided nor distinguished in the soul of the true Russian. Therefore a man holding to another confession cannot love the Russian Tsar except with a love that is harmful for the Tsar and for Russia, a love whose influence of necessity must strive to destroy precisely that which constitutes the very first condition of the mutual love of the Tsar and Russia, the basis of his correct and beneficent rule and the condition of her correct and beneficent construction.

"Therefore to wish that the Russian government should cease to have the spirit and bear the character of an Orthodox government, but be completely indifferent to the confessions, accepting the spirit of so-called common Christianity, which does not belong to any particular Church and was thought up recently by some unbelieving philosophers and half-believing Protestants – to wish for this would signify for the present time the tearing up of all bonds of love and trust between the government and the people, and for the future, - that is, if the government were to hide its indifference to Orthodoxy until it educates the people in the same coldness to its Church, - it would produce the complete destruction of the whole fortress of Russia and the annihilation of the whole of her world significance. For for him who knows Russia and her Orthodox Faith, there can be no doubt that she grew up on it and became strong by it, since by it alone is she strong and prosperous."

In a critical review of an article by Pastor Wiener, who was defending the principle of complete separation of Church and State and complete tolerance, Kireyevsky wrote: "The author says very justly that in most states where

there is a dominant religion, the government uses it as a means for its own private ends and under the excuse of protecting it oppresses it. But this happens *not because* there is a dominant faith in the state, but, on the contrary, because the dominant faith of the people *is not dominant* in the state apparatus. This unfortunate relationship takes place when, as a consequence of some chance historical circumstances, the rift opens up between the convictions of the people and of the government. Then the faith of the people is used as a means, but not for long. One of three things must unfailingly happen: either the people wavers in its faith and then the whole state apparatus wavers, as we see in the West; or the government attains a correct self-knowledge and sincerely converts to the faith of the people, as we hope; or the people sees that it is being deceived, as we fear.

"But what are the normal, desirable relations between Church and State? The state must not agree with the Church so as to search out and persecute heretics and force them to believe (this is contrary to the spirit of Christianity and has a counter-productive effect, and harms the state itself almost as much as the Church); but it must agree with the Church so as to place as the main purpose of its existence to be penetrated constantly, more and more, with the spirit of the Church and not only not look on the Church as a means to its own most fitting existence, but, on the contrary, see in its own existence only a means for the fullest and most fitting installation of the Church of God on earth.

"The State is a construction of society having as its aim earthly, temporal life. The Church is a construction of the same society having as its aim heavenly, eternal life. If society understands its life in such a way that in it the temporal must serve the eternal, the state apparatus of this society must also serve the Church. But if society understands its life in such a way that in it earthly relationships carry on by themselves, and spiritual relations by themselves, then the state in such a society must be separated from the Church. But such a society will consist not of Christians, but of unbelievers, or, at any rate, of mixed faiths and convictions. Such a state cannot make claims to a harmonious, normal development. The whole of its dignity must be limited by its *negative* character. But there where the people is bound inwardly, by identical convictions of faith, there it has the right to wish and demand that both its external bonds – familial, social and governmental – should be in agreement with its religious inspirations, and that its government should be penetrated by the same spirit. To act in hostility to this spirit means to act in hostility to the people itself, even if these actions afford it some earthly advantages."

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Another supporter of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality who is sometimes classified as a Slavophile was the poet and diplomat Fyodor Ivanovich Tiutchev. Already at the age of 19, in his poem, *On Pushkin's Ode on Freedom*, he had rebuked his fellow-poet for disturbing the hearts of the citizens by his call to freedom. While sharing the world-view of the Slavophiles, he took their sympathies and antipathies to their logical conclusions. As Demetrius Merezhkovsky expressed it, Tiutchev put bones into the soft body of Slavophilism, crossed its 't's and dotted its 'i's.

Thus he posed the contrast between Russia and the West as a struggle between Christ and Antichrist. "The supreme power of the people," he wrote, "is in essence an antichristian idea." Popular power and Tsarist power mutually exclude each other. So it was not a question of two cultures living side by side with each other and complementing each other in some sense. No: it was a fight to the death between the Russian idea and the European idea, between the Rome of the Papacy and the political and social structures it evolved, and the Third Rome of the Orthodox Tsar…

Tiutchev believed in *the Empire*, whose soul was the Orthodox Church and whose body was the Slavic race. In particular, it was "the Great Greco-Russian Eastern Empire", whose destiny was to unite the two halves of Europe under the Russian Emperor, with some Austrian lands going to Russia. There would be an Orthodox Pope in Rome and an Orthodox Patriarch in Constantinople. The Empire was a principle, and so indivisible. Western history had been a struggle between the schismatic Roman papacy and the usurper-empire of Charlemagne and his successors. This struggle "ended for the one in the Reformation, i.e. the denial of the Church, and for the other in the Revolution, i.e. the denial of the Empire". The struggle between Russia and Napoleon had been the struggle "between the lawful Empire and the crowned Revolution".

In April, 1848, Tiutchev wrote: "There have long been only two real powers in Europe – the revolution and Russia. These two powers are now opposed to each other, and perhaps tomorrow they will enter into conflict. Between them there can be no negotiations, no treaties; the existence of the one is equivalent to the death of the other! On the outcome of this struggle that has arisen between them, the greatest struggle that the world has ever seen, the whole political and religious future of mankind will depend for many centuries.

"The fact of this rivalry is now being revealed everywhere. In spite of that, the understanding of our age, deadened by false wisdom, is such that the present generation, faced with a similar huge fact, is far from completely comprehending its true significance and has not evaluated its real causes.

"Up to now they have sought for its explanation in the purely political sphere; they have tried to interpret by a distinction of concepts on the exclusively human plane. In fact, the quarrel between the revolution and Russia depends on deeper causes. They can be defined in two words.

"Russia is first of all the Christian Empire; the Russian people is Christian not only by virtue of the Orthodoxy of its convictions, but also thanks to something more in the realm of feelings than convictions. It is Christian by virtue of that capacity for self-denial and self-sacrifice which constitutes as it were the basis of her moral nature. The revolution is first of all the enemy of Christianity! Antichristian feeling is the soul of the revolution: it is its special, distinguishing feature. Those changes in form to which it has been subjected, those slogans which it has adopted in turn, everything, even its violence and crimes have been secondary and accidental. But the one thing in it that is not accidental is precisely the antichristian feeling that inspires it, it is that (it is impossible not to be convinced of this) that has acquired for it this threatening dominance over the world. He who does not understand this is no more than a blind man present at a spectacle that the world presents to him.

"The human I, wishing to depend only on itself, not recognising and not accepting any other law besides its own will – in a word, the human I, taking the place of God, - does not, of course, constitute something new among men. But such has it become when raised to the status of a political and social right, and when it strives, by virtue of this right, to rule society. This is the new phenomenon which acquired the name of the French revolution in 1789.

"Since that time, in spite of all its permutations, the revolution has remained true to its nature, and perhaps never in the whole course of this development has it recognized itself as so of one piece, so sincerely antichristian as at the present moment, when it has ascribed to itself the banner of Christianity: 'brotherhood'. In the name of this we can even suppose that it has attained its apogee. And truly, if we listen to those naively blasphemous big words which have become, so to speak, the official language of the present age, then will not everyone think that the new French republic was brought into the world only in order to fulfill the Gospel law? It was precisely this calling that the forces created by the revolution ascribed to themselves – with the exception, however, of that change which the revolution considered it necessary to produce, when it intended to replace the feeling of humility and self-denial, which constitutes the basis of Christianity, with the spirit of pride and haughtiness, free and voluntary good works with compulsory good works. And instead of brotherhood preached and accepted in the name of God, it intended to establish a brotherhood imposed by fear on the people-master. With the exception of these differences, its dominance

really promises to turn into the Kingdom of Christ!

"And nobody should be misled by this despicable good will which the new powers are showing to the Catholic Church and her servers. It is almost the most important sign of the real feeling of the revolution, and the surest proof of the position of complete power that it has attained. And truly, why should the revolution show itself as hostile to the clergy and Christian priests who not only submit to it, but accept and recognize it, who, in order to propitiate it, glorify all its excesses and, without knowing it themselves, become partakers in all its unrighteousness? If even similar behaviour were founded on calculation alone, this calculation would be apostasy; but if conviction is added to it, then this is already more than apostasy.

"However, we can foresee that there will be no lack of persecutions, too. On that day when concessions have reached their extreme extent, the catholic church will consider it necessary to display resistance, and it will turn out that she will be able to display resistance only by going back to martyrdom. We can fully rely on the revolution: it will remain in all respects faithful to itself and consistent to the end!

"The February explosion did the world a great service in overthrowing the pompous scaffolding of errors hiding reality. The less penetrating minds have probably now understood that the history of Europe in the course of the last thirty three years was nothing other than a continuous mystification. And indeed with what inexorably light has the whole of this past, so recent and already so distant from us, been lit up? Who, for example, will now not recognize what a laughable pretension was expressed in that wisdom of our age which naively imagined that it had succeeded in suppressing the revolution with constitutional incantations, muzzling its terrible energy by means of a formula of lawfulness? After all that has happened, who can still doubt that from the moment when the revolutionary principle penetrated into the blood of society, all these concessions, all these reconciling formulas are nothing other than drugs which can, perhaps, put to sleep the sick man for a time, but are not able to hinder the further development of the illness itself…"

Nevertheless, Tiutchev did have his criticisms of the Autocracy.

In 1852 the tsar censored the *Huntsman's Sketches* of the great novelist, Ivan Turgenev. Its only apparent "sin" was its sympathetic portrayal of the sufferings of the serfs at the hands of the landowners. But the tsar considered that this cast a slur on the whole of the landowning class.

In spite of his fervent support for the Autocracy, Tiutchev was critical of this unimaginative use of censorship. Thus in 1857 he wrote: "It is impossible

to impose on minds an absolute and too prolonged restriction and yoke without substantial harm for the social organism…. Even the authorities themselves in the course of time are unable to avoid the disadvantages of such a system. Around the sphere in which they are present there is formed a desert and a huge mental emptiness, and governmental thought, not meeting from outside itself either control or guidance or even the slightest point of support, ends by weakening under its own weight even before it destined to fall under the blows of events." "Why," he asked in 1872, "can we set against harmful theories and destructive tendencies only material suppression? Into what has the true principle of conservatism been transformed with us? Why has our soul become so horribly stale? If the authorities because of an insufficiency of principles and moral convictions pass to measures of material oppression, it is thereby being turned into the most terrible helper of denial and revolutionary overthrow. But it will begin to understand this only when the evil is already incorrigible…"

4. TSAR NICHOLAS I

Tsar Nicholas was one of the most powerful rulers in history. And, contrary to much commentary on him, he did not rule by the knout alone, nor was he ruled by personal ambition and lust for power, but by force of personality and iron devotion to what he saw as his duty to God and empire. This can be seen in the following anecdote related by Sebag Sebastian Montefiore: "As Poland's rebellion was crushed, a cholera outbreak sparked rioting on the Haymarket in Petersburg. Hastening there with just two adjutants, Nicholas faced down the mob, then ordered them to their knees. 'I have to ask God's mercy for your sins,' thundered God's own emperor. 'You have offended Him deeply. You've forgotten your duty of obedience to me and I must answer to God for your behavior! Remember you're not Poles, you're not Frenchmen, you're Russians. I order you to disperse immediately.' The rioters obeyed. No wonder Nicholas believed he was the sacred personification of Russia. 'I am only here,' he told his children preciously, 'to carry out her orders and her intentions.' Nicholas was convinced that 'Our Russia was entrusted to us by God,' once praying aloud at a parade: 'O God, I thank Thee for having made me so powerful.'

"'No one was better created for the role,' wrote Anna Tyutcheva, a young maid-of-honour who later wrote a superbly indiscreet diary. 'His impressive handsomeness, regal bearing and severe Olympian profile – everything, down to the smile of a condescending Jupiter, breathed earthly deity.' He played the role perfectly: 'There is nothing more terrible on earth than the gaze of his colourless pewter eyes.'"

The destroyer of the Decembrist rebellion, Tsar Nicholas I, had never been swayed by liberal ideas. Having tasted something of the flavour of democratic life in France during the reign of his father, he said to Golenischev-Kutuzov: "If, to our misfortune, this evil genius transferred all these clubs and meetings, which create more noise than substance, to us, then I would beseech God to repeat the miracle of the confusion of the tongues or, even better, deprive those who use their tongues in this way of the gift of speech." A man of strict life and strict opinions, who was venerated by Saints Seraphim of Sarov and Theophilus of the Kiev Caves, his rule was made still stricter by the fact that he came to the throne in the midst of the Decembrist rebellion and had to punish the rebels as his first task.

Some have portrayed the Tsar as having been unreasonably strict and censorious. However, he wanted to abolish serfdom, and took important preparatory measures towards that great act which was carried out in the end by his son. Moreover, he had the ability to convert, and not simply crush, his

opponents. Thus it was after a long, sincere conversation with the liberalizing Pushkin that he was able to say: "Gentlemen, I present to you a new Pushkin!"

"And it was truly thus," writes Lebedev. "Not out of fear before the authorities, not hypocritically, but sincerely and truly, Pushkin, the friend of the 'Decembrists', the worldly skiver, in life as in poetry, after 1826 renounced his free-thinking and Masonry and created his best and greatest works!"

"Having rejected a rotten support, the nobility," writes Lebedev, Tsar Nicholas "made his supports the Orthodox Church, the system of state institutions (in which the class of bureaucrats, of officials, acquired great significance) and the Russian people which he loved! Having grasped this main direction of the Tsar's politics, Count S. Uvarov, the minister of enlightenment expressed in the remarkable formula: *Orthodoxy, Autocracy* and *Nationality*". "Our duty," declared Uvarov in his memorandum to the Tsar in November, 1833, "is to see that in accordance with the supreme intention of our August Monarch, the education of the people is carried out in the united spirit of Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality."

"This schema," writes Sergius Firsov, "can be called a political reincarnation of the Byzantine theory of 'the symphony of powers' in the changed conditions of State realities in Russia." The three elements of the formula were closely linked, and there was a definite order in them. First came Orthodoxy (as opposed to Catholicism and Protestantism), then Autocracy (as opposed to Absolutism and Democracy), and then Nationality (as opposed to Internationalism and Nationalism). The supreme value was Orthodoxy, whose first line of defence was the Autocracy, and second - national feeling. Any attempt to invert this order – as, for example, to make Orthodoxy merely a support for Autocracy, or both as supports of Nationality, would be equivalent to idolatry and lead to the downfall of Russia.

Some, such as D.S. Khomiakov, thought that an inversion of this order, placing Autocracy as the supreme value, did indeed take place: "Orthodoxy as the everyday faith of the Russian people can be respected also by others, even by non-Christians. This is, so to speak, the inner pledge of the life of the Russian people, and it is completely possible to respect it and even make up to it while remaining in the sphere of personal conscience a complete and irreconcilable opponent of 'ecclesiastical-dogmatic Orthodoxy'. It is hardly likely that the government of the 30s of the 19th century reasoned like that: but it seems undoubted that unconsciously it understood the matter in this way. It truly represented Orthodoxy as an ecclesiastical-everyday institution founded a long time ago for the enlightenment of the people; and as such the

people got used to it completely in the sense of a cult and especially as a 'teaching on unquestioning obedience to the civil, God-given authorities'. In this form, truly, Orthodoxy closely touches the sphere of the State and fits in well into the general picture for the programme of state education. With Orthodoxy of such a kind, strictly speaking, anyone can get on, of whatever faith he may be – since he only recognises the main part of the programme, its root – Autocracy (absolutism, according to the official understanding, also). This part was obligatory for absolutely everybody; but the first and third were meant only to serve as a certain ethnographic colouring for the middle member [of the programme's triad]: everyone was obliged to recognise that its essence was Autocracy. Of what kind? Russian. But the concept of what is Russian falls into two parts: the Orthodox-Russian and the ethnographic-Russian. Thus for a purely Russian youth the programme had its complete significance, that is, the first and last concepts were obligatory only as defining the sole completely essential concept in it, 'Autocracy' (absolutism). Of course, however diluted the concept of Orthodoxy may be so as to fit into the government's programme of civil education, it was, to a large degree, inseparable from the Church's teaching and dogma. But in the present case we have to firmly establish the position that, without in any way rejecting the absolute significance of Orthodoxy as the expression of the faith and the ethics that flows from that, we are dealing with it here in a somewhat different sense, as it is placed at the foundation of civil education, that is, in the sense of its application to civil and cultural life, which are expressed firstly by the term 'Autocracy' and secondly by the term 'Nationhood': and this is because (to repeat) Orthodoxy in the absolute sense can stand only 'for itself' and excludes the possibility of a union with any state task whatever, and even with any national task. Orthodoxy is universal, it is far higher than states and peoples; it denies neither statehood nor nationalities, but it is united with nothing…

"None of these questions were clarified officially; and the Orthodoxy of Nicholas Pavlovich and Count Uvarov remained the same diffuse concept as the liberté of the French revolution. It in fact remained at the level only of a negative concept, as did the concept 'Nationality'. Only 'Autocracy' received a positive meaning, because, firstly, this is in essence a more concrete concept than the other two; and then mainly because it was and is a term clearly understood by those who established the formula. Autocracy for them is, both theoretically and practically, absolutism. Nobody was mistaken in this meaning and there were no misunderstandings concerning it: the more so in that it indeed revealed itself graphically. But Orthodoxy was understood only as not Roman Catholicism – a very convenient faith from the state's point of view; and not Protestantism, which unleashed the undesirable liberty, not only in the sphere of the faith alone (if you can criticize the faith, then all the more the rest, also); and not as sectarianism – also a teaching displeasing to

the police. In the same way 'Nationality' did not find a concrete expression of itself; and in the absence of this it settled on language: the spread of the Russian language was respected as the spread also of the Russian spirit – its nationality…"

However, this is not the view of Archpriest Lev Lebedev, who writes: "Beginning already with Paul I, the rapprochement of imperial power with the Church continued under Nicholas I, being raised to a qualitatively higher level. The All-Russian Autocrat from now on did not oppose himself to the Church and did not even consider himself 'self-sufficient' or 'independent' of her. On the contrary, he saw himself as a faithful son of the Orthodox Church, completely sharing the faith of his people and bound in all his politics to be guided by the commandments of God, proceeding precisely from the *Orthodox* world-view (and not from the demands of a certain non-existent 'religion of nature', as under Catherine II). This was a good, grace-filled *radical change*. It made itself immediately felt also in the relations of the two powers – the tsar's and the Church's. From now on the over-procurators of the Synod were people who enjoyed the respect and trust of the Russian hierarchs and considered themselves faithful children of the Church. Such were Admiral Shishkov and Count Protasov. There was not always unanimity between them and the members of the Synod. Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), for example, more than once 'warred' with Protasov. But these were quarrels about separate matters, where both sides were governed by the single desire to benefit Holy Orthodoxy (even if they understood this differently)."

This beneficial change in Church-State relations was reflected in the *voluntary* reunion of the uniates in the western territories with the Orthodox Church. Favourable conditions for this change had been created by the fall of Poland in 1815, the expulsion of the Jesuits from Russia in 1820 and the suppression of the Polish rebellion in 1830-1831. Then, in 1835, a secret committee on the uniate question was formed in St. Petersburg consisting of the uniate bishop Joseph Semashko, the real soul of the movement, Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow, the over-procurator of the Holy Synod and the minister of the interior. By 1839 1,600,000 had converted to Orthodoxy.

In spite of these positive changes, the Tsar's relationship to the Church continued to fall short of true "symphony". In fact, formally speaking, the power of the Tsar over the Church was increased. Thus in 1832 a new collection of the Fundamental Laws was published that said: "The Emperor as the Christian sovereign is the supreme defender and preserver of the dogmas of the dominant faith and the supervisor of right faith and every good order in the Holy Church". In the administration of the Church, intoned articles 42 and 43, "the autocratic power acts by means of the Holy Governing Synod,

which was founded by it." In these formulae, writes Fr. Georges Florovsky, "there is clearly and faithfully conveyed the State's consciousness of itself and self-definition: in them there is taken to its logical conclusion the thought of Peter, who considered himself to be 'the supreme judge' of the Spiritual College, and who openly derived its privileges from his own autocratic power – 'when it was established by the Monarch and under his rule'".

Such an overbearing attitude of the State towards the Church was bound to lead to friction. And yet when there were clashes between the Tsar and the hierarchs on matters of conscience, the Tsar showed himself ready to give way, which gives strength to Lebedev's claim that a qualitatively higher level of Church-State relations had been attained.

Thus once Metropolitan Philaret refused to bless a triumphal monument because it had some pagan hieroglyphs and representations of pagan gods. The Emperor, showing a good grasp of church history, said: "I understand, but tell him [Philaret] that I am not Peter the Great and he is not St. Metrophan." Still, he allowed Philaret not to take part in the ceremony.According to another account, on hearing of Philaret's disinclination to serve, the Emperor said: "Prepare the horses; I'm leaving today", so that the ceremony took place without either Tsar or metropolitan. Afterwards, on returning to the Trinity Lavra, Philaret said to his spiritual father, Archimandrite Anthony: "Did I act well? I annoyed the Tsar. I don't have the merits of the hierarch Metrophan." "Don't take them upon yourself," replied Fr. Anthony, "but remember that you are a Christian bishop, a pastor of the Church of Christ, to whom only one thing is terrible: to depart from the will of Jesus Christ." Then the hierarch revealed that the previous night St. Sergius had entered his locked room, come up to his bed, and said: "Don't be disturbed, it will all pass…"

Again, in 1835 the Emperor wanted his son and heir, the Tsarevich Alexander Nikolaevich, to become a member of the Holy Synod. But Metropolitan Philaret, together with the other hierarchs, was against the idea, and on meeting the tsarevich, asked him when he had received clerical ordination. Shamed, the tsarevich henceforth refrained from attending sessions of the Holy Synod.

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We have discussed *Orthodoxy* and *Autocracy* in Tsar Nicholas' ideological schema. What about the third term, *Nationality*?

"While nationality," writes Serhii Plokhy, "was introduced as a new element of the official Russian belief system, it came in as a distant third in

Uvarov's own thinking as expressed in his memorandum to the tsar, and he did not conceive of it as an equivalent of modern nationalism. He understood 'nationality' as native tradition rooted in Russia's historical development, linking th throne and the church in order to ensure their stability.

"Ironically, from today's viewpoint, but quite normally for Uvarov's time, his program of Russian nation-building was written in French, which was still the prevailing idiom of the Russian elites. Uvarov defined his new principle as *nationalité*, which his clerks subsequently translated as *narodnost'*. The Russian term is best translated in English as 'national way of life'…

"According to Uvarov, nationality was the traditional way of life that was supposed to ensure the continuity of the other two key elements of Russian identity – religion and autocracy – in an age shaped by new European ideas. If in Europe the idea of nation, closely associated with the principle of popular representation, challenged political autocracy, in Russia it was supposed to support the traditional tsarist regime. Uvarov did not seek to justify the tsar's autocratic rule by claiming that it was based on divine right, as was customary at the time in the imperial capital; not did he look to the church to legitimize it. Instead he linked autocracy with nationality, claiming that 'one and other flow from the same source and are conjoined on every page of the history of the Russian people.' He stopped short, however, of suggesting that the Russian nation was the source of autocratic power.

"Uvarov was clearly being selective in introducing the Western idea of nationality to Russia. He ignored Schlegel's emphasis on national language and culture, stressing attachment to traditional institutions. Since the Russian Empire was multiethnic, the idea of ethnic particularity threatened it with the kind of mobilization against Russian political dominance that the Poles had demonstrated in 1830. There was also the prospect that Russian nationalists might define their rights and interests differently from those of the monarchy. Uvarov sought to link empire and nationality in the hope that the latter would strengthen the former. He concluded his memorandum with a reference to the responsibility that he felt to 'God, Sovereign and Fatherland'. This was a reprise of the triad enunciated by Admiral Shishkov, Russia's chief propagandist at the time of the Napoleonic Wars, indicating the link between Uvarov's formula and established imperial tradition.

"Despite Uvarov's conservative intentions, the introduction of the term 'nationality' into Russian politics meant that European nationalism had arrived in the Russian Empire. Peter I's chief ideologue, Teofam Prokopovych, had used the term 'fatherland'; it had not been transmuted into 'nation' (prefigured in the *Synopsis* of 1674, where 'nation' was also used in a traditional rather than a revolutionary sense). What 'nationality' would mean

in practice was not yet clear, either to the author of the new ideological triad or his addressee, the tsar himself. It would take generations to resolve the political issues implicit in the term. What were the borders of Russian nationality? Did it suffice for a subject of the empire to profess loyalty to the tsar and the Orthodox faith, or were there other essential elements of Russianness as well? Nowhere were these questions more pressing, in the wake of the Polish uprising of 1830-1831, than in the former territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth annexed to the Russian Empire…"

5. THE POLISH REVOLUTIONS

It was Tsar Nicholas' destiny to suppress the revolution both at home and abroad. Thus he intervened decisively in Hungary in 1848 in order to save the monarchist order against the liberal revolution. But he decided not to intervene in the revolutions in France and Belgium in 1830. Encouraged by this, the Poles rose against Tsarist authority in November, 1830, although, as we have seen, they had been given a very liberal constitution by Tsar Alexander in 1815.

This time the Tsar did act. As he wrote to his brother, who ruled the Polish Kingdom: "It is our duty to think of our security. When I say *ours,* I mean the tranquility of Europe." And so the rebellion was crushed. Europe was saved again – and was again uncomprehending and ungrateful. Moreover, the tsar earned the undying hatred of Poles: "I know they want to kill me, but if God doesn't will it, nothing will happen, so I am quite calm."

Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes: "The revolutions of 1830 in France and Belgium gave an impulse to the Masonic movement in Poland. It had two basic tendencies – an extreme republican one (headed by the historian Lelevel) and a more moderate aristocratic one (headed by A. Chartoysky). At the end of 1830 there began a rebellion in Warsaw. Great Prince Constantine Pavlovich with a detachment of Russian soldiers was forced to abandon Poland. In 1831 there came there the armies of General Dibich, which had no significant success, in particular by reason of a very strong outbreak of cholera, from which both Dibich and Great Prince Constantine died. Meanwhile the revolutionaries in Warsaw created first a 'Provisional government' with a 'dictator' at its head, and then convened the Sejm. The rebels demanded first the complete independence of Poland with the addition to it of Lithuania and western Rus', and then declared the 'deposition' of the Romanov dynasty from the throne of the Kingdom of Poland. Count Paskevich of Erevan was sent to Poland. He took Warsaw by storm and completely destroyed the Masonic revolutionary armies, forcing their remnants abroad [where they played a significant role in the revolutionary movement in Western Europe]. Poland was divided into provinces and completely included into the composition of the Russian Empire. The language of business was declared to be Russian. Russian landowners received land in Poland. A Deputy was now placed at the head of the Kingdom of Poland. He became Paskevich with the new title of Prince of Warsaw. In connection with all this it became clear that the Polish magnates and landowners who had kept their land-holdings in Belorussia and Ukraine had already for some time been persecuting the Orthodox Russians and Little Russians and also the uniates, and had been occupied in polonizing education

in general the whole cultural life in these lands. Tsar Nicholas I was forced to take severe measures to restore Russian enlightenment and education in the West Russian and Ukrainian land. In particular, a Russian university was opened in Kiev. The part of the Belorussian and Ukrainian population headed by Bishop Joseph Semashko which had been in a forcible unia with the Catholic Church since the end of the 16th century desired reunion with Orthodoxy. Nicholas I decided to satisfy this desire and in 1839 all the uniates (besides the inhabitants of Kholm diocese) were united to 'to the ancestral Orthodox All-Russian Church', as they put it. This was a great feast of Orthodoxy! Masses of uniates were united *voluntarily,* without any compulsion. All this showed that Russia had subdued and humbled Poland not because she wished to lord it over her, and resist her independence, but only because *Poland* wanted to lord it (both politically and *spiritually*) over the ages-old Russian population, depriving it of its own life and 'ancestral' faith! With *such* a Poland as she was then striving to be, there was nothing to be done but completely subdue her and *force her to respect the rights* of other peoples! But to the Polish Catholics Russia provided, as usual, every opportunity of living in accordance with their faith and customs."

Unfortunately, the Poles and the West did not see it like that. Thus the composer Frederick Chopin wrote, somewhat blasphemously: "The suburbs [of Warsaw] are destroyed, burned… Moscow rules the world! O God, do You exist? You're there and You don't avenge it. How many more Russian crimes do You want – or – are You a Russian too!!?"

Another artist who gave expression to the new Polish faith was the poet Mickiewicz. "Poland will arise," he wrote, "and free nations of Europe from bondage. *Ibi patria, ubi male*; wherever in Europe liberty is suppressed and is fought for, there is the battle for your country."

Adam Zamoyski writes that Mickiewicz turned "the spiritual fantasies of a handful of soldiers and intellectuals into the articles of faith that built a modern nation.

"Mickiewicz had established his reputation as Poland's foremost lyric poet in the 1820s, and enhanced his political credentials by his exile in Russia, where he met several prominent Decembrists and grew close to Pushkin [who, however, did not sympathize with his views on Poland]. In 1829 Mickiewicz received permission to go to Germany to take the waters. He met Mendelssohn and Hegel in Berlin, Metternich in Marienbad, and August Schlegel in Bonn, and attended Goethe's eightieth birthday party in Weimar. Goethe kissed him on the forehead, gave him the quill with which he had worked on Faust, and commissioned a portrait of him for his collection. Mickiewicz then went to Italy where, apart from a de rigueur trip to

Switzerland (Chillon and Altdorf, with Byron and Schiller's Wilhelm Tell in his hand), he spent the next year-and-half. It was in Rome that news of the November Rising [in Warsaw] reached him. He set off for Poland, but his attempts to cross the border were foiled by Cossack patrols, and he was obliged to watch the debacle from Dresden.

"In this tranquil Saxon city he was gripped by inspiration and wrote frantically in fits lasting up to three days, without pausing to eat or sleep. The fruit was the third part of a long poetic drama entitled *Forefathers' Eve*, which can only be described as a national passion play. Mickiewicz had also seen the significance of the holy night [of November 29, 1830], and he likened all monarchs, and Nicholas in particular, to Herod – their sense of guilty foreboding led them to massacre the youth of nations. The drama describes the transformation through suffering of the young poet and lover, Konrad, into a warrior-poet. He is a parable for Poland as a whole, but he is also something more. 'My soul has now entered the motherland, and with my body I have taken her soul: I and the motherland are one,' he declares after having endured torture. 'My name is Million, because I love and suffer for millions… I feel the sufferings of the whole nation as a mother feels the pain of the fruit within her womb.'

"In Paris in 1832 Mickiewicz published a short work entitled *Books of the Polish Nation and of the Pilgrimage of Poland*. It was quickly translated into several languages and caused a sensation. It is a bizarre work, couched in biblical prose, giving a moral account of Polish history. After an Edenic period, lovingly described, comes the eighteenth century, a time when 'nations were spoiled, so much so that among them there was left only one man, both citizen and soldier' – a reference to Lafayette. The 'Satanic Trinity' of Catherine of Russia, Frederick of Prussia and Maria Theresa of Austria decided to murder Poland, because Poland was Liberty. They crucified the innocent nation while degenerate France played the role of Pilate. But that was not to be the end of it. 'For the Polish nation did not die; its body lies in the tomb, while its soul has left the earth, that is public life, and visited the abyss, that is the private life of peoples suffering slavery at home and in exile, in order to witness their suffering. And on the third day the soul will re-enter the body, and the nation will rise from the dead and will liberate all the peoples of Europe from slavery.' In a paraphrase of the Christian Creed, Liberty will then ascend the throne in the capital of the world, and judge the nations, ushering in the age of peace.

"So the Polish nation was now in Limbo, and all it had to do in order to bring about its own resurrection and that of all grieving peoples was to cleanse and redeem itself through a process of expiation which Mickiewicz saw as its 'pilgrimage'. This was to be a kind of forty days in the wilderness.

The pilgrims must fast and pray on the anniversaries of the battles of Wawer and Grochow, reciting litanies to the 30,000 dead of the Confederation of Bar and the 20,000 martyrs of Praga; they must observe their ancient customs and wear national dress. One is reminded of Rousseau's admonitions in his *Considérations sur le Gouvernement de Pologne*.

"Rousseau would have been proud of this generation. As one freedom fighter writes in his memoirs: 'Only he loves Poland with his heart and his soul, only he is a true son of his Motherland who has cast aside all lures and desires, all bad habits, prejudice and passions, and been reborn in the pure faith, he who, having recognized the reasons for our defeats and failures through his own judgement and conviction, brings his whole love, his whole – not just partial, but whole – conviction, his courage and his endurance, and lays them on the altar of the purely national future.' He had taken part in the November Rising and a conspiratorial fiasco in 1833, for which he was rewarded with fifteen years in the Spielberg and Küfstein prisons. Yet decades later he still believed that the November Rising had 'called Poland to a new life' and brought her 'salvation' closer by a hundred years. Such feelings were shared by tens of thousands, given expression by countless poets and artists, and understood by all the literate classes.

"Most of Mickiewicz's countrymen read his works and wept over them. They identified with them and learned them by heart. They did not follow the precepts laid down in them, nor did they really believe in this gospel in any literal sense. These works were a let-out, an excuse even, rather than a guiding rule. But they did provide an underlying ethical explanation of a state of affairs that was otherwise intolerable to the defeated patriots. It was an explanation that made moral sense and was accepted at the subconscious level. It was a spiritual and psychological lifeline that kept them from sinking into a Slough of Despond. It made misfortune not only bearable, but desirable…"

55,000 Polish troops and 6,000 civilians who made a great exodus to the West and Paris kept this cult alive, not in Polish hearts only, but throughout Europe. Only the Russians were not seduced by its masochistic charm… Nevertheless, when Alexander II became Tsar and was crowned King of Poland, he granted a general amnesty to Polish prisoners in Russia, and about 9000 exiles returned to their homes from Siberia between 1857 and 1860. However, they brought back with them the virus of nationalism. Thus on the day after the Tsar's brother, Grand Duke Constantine, was made viceroy of Poland, he was shot in the shoulder. Nor did a programme of "re-Polonization" – more liberal state administration and local government regulations governing the use of the Polish language, and Polish educational institutions – appease the nationalists. Even when all the other nations of

Europe had settled down after the abortive revolutions of 1848, the Poles rose again.

"In January 1863," writes John van de Kiste, "they slaughtered Russian soldiers asleep in their Warsaw barracks, and national resistance turned to general uprising. This spread through the kingdom into the nine formerly Polish provinces known as Russia's Western region, where powerful landlords and Catholic clergy were ready to give vent to their hatred of Russian domination. For a while it looked as if England, France and Austria might join in on the side of Warsaw after giving their tacit blessing to the rebels, but Russia put down the unrest at no little cost to the Poles…. While the Poles butchered scores of Russian peasants including women and children, the Russians erected gibbets in the streets where rebels and civilians were hanged in their hundreds, with thousands more sent to Siberia. The insurrection was finally quelled in May 1864, when the more conservative Count Theodore Berg was sent to replace Constantine as viceroy."

6. THE UKRAINIAN QUESTION

It was only natural that the Russians should fear the spread of the nationalist virus from Poland eastwards, into the Ukrainian lands that had once been under Polish dominion. However, both linguistically and culturally the Ukrainians were closer to the Russians than to the Poles; and they belonged to the same Orthodox Church. Moreover, "by the second half of nineteenth century," as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, "the Ukrainian sense of separate identity was in any case rather weak, being borne mainly by intellectuals and professional people in the smaller towns. Large numbers of peasants spoke variants of Ukrainian, but they had no wider national consciousness, and their colloquial tongue was viewed by most Russians as a farmyard dialect of Russian. However, the survival of Ukrainian culture was quite strong, thanks to the heritage of the poet Taras Shevchenko, the writings of historians such as Mykhaylo Drahomaniw, and the possibility of smuggling materials across the frontier from Habsburg Galicia, where Ukrainian identity was officially fostered as a counterweight to Polish influence."

Things began to change on March 31, 1847, when a young professor of history at Kiev University, Mykola (Nikolai) Kostomarov, was arrested in accordance with an order proceeding from the emperor himself. "It was given," writes Serhii Plokhy, "by Count Aleksei Orlov, head of the Third Section of the Imperial Chancellery – the body responsible for political surveillance. The heir to the throne, the future Tsar Alexander II, was briefed on the case, which involved a number of Kyivan intellectuals – government officials, teachers, and students. One of them, Taras Shevchenko, an artists and popular poet who wrote in Ukrainian, was arrested on April 5, upon his arrival in Kyiv and also escorted to St. Petersburg. There were further arrests and more deportations to the capital, where the liberal public was at a loss to explain the authorities' actins.

"The governor general of Kyiv, Podolia, and Volhynia, Dmitrii Bibikov, was then in St. Petersburg, reporting on, among other things, a proclamation that had been found on the wall of a building in Kyiv. It read: 'Brothers! A great hour is upon us, an hour in which you are being given the opportunity to wash off the dishonor inflicted on the dust of our ancestors, on our native Ukraine, by the base hand of our eternal foes. Who among you will not lend a hand to this great undertaking? God and good people are with us! The ever loyal sons of Ukraine, foes of the *katsapy* [derogatory term for Russians].'

"The appeal was as anti-Russian as could be imagined, but it was written in Russian, not Polish, and not addressed to the Polish nobles who then dominated Kyiv society. It was addressed to 'the faithful sons of Ukraine' –

people whom the imperial government considered Russian by nationality. Bibikov was sent back to Kyiv with order to take over supervision of the Kyiv educational district…

"There was no doubt that this manifestation of disloyalty came from the very institutions that had been created to ensure the loyalty of the region's inhabitants to tsar and empire. Mykola Kostomarov taught at the university, while Taras Shevchenko, who had been appointed instructor of drawing there, had earlier been employed by the Archaeographic Commission, which aimed to document the Russian identity of Right-Bank Ukraine. Official policy appeared to have backfired. Instead of solidifying a common front between the government and the 'Russian' population of the western provinces against the Polish threat, it had contributed to dividing the imperial Russian nation and promoted the development of a separate nation that would claim equal rights with the Great Russians in the core areas of the empire in the course of the next few decades. A new Ukrainian nation was emerging from the cocoon of the old Little Russian identity. The imperial government would do everything in its power to stop its development and put the Ukrainian genie back into the Little Russian bottle.

"The Third Section's investigation into the activities of Kostomarov, Shevchenko and others uncovered the existence of a clandestine organization, the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius. Its goal was the creation of a voluntary federation of Slavic nations, with Ukraine at its core. The investigation of the brotherhood became known in government circles as the Slavophile case, later renamed the case of the Ukrainian Slavophiles…

"Among the key figures of the Slavophile movement mentioned by investigators of the Brotherhood of Saints Cyril and Methodius in their reports were two Moscow University professors, Mikhail Pogodin and Stepan Shevyrev. Pogodin, whom Uvarov had rejected as the prospective author of a Russian history textbook integrating the western provinces into the empire, taught history at Moscow University; Shevyrev lectured there on philology and literature. The two also served as copublishers of the journal *Moskvitianin* (The Muscovite), which later became a mouthpiece of the Slavophile movement in the 1840s. Pogodin was a leading figure in the emerging pan-Slavic movement, which regarded all Slavs as a single family. By stressing the uniqueness (*samobytnost'*) and self-awareness (*samosoznanie*) of the Russian nation, the Slavophiles, for all their pan-Slavic ecumenism, set an example to non-Russian Slavs who wished to celebrate the distinctiveness of their own peoples and, consequently, their right to autonomy and independence.

"Early on, Ukraine took a special place in the Slavophile imagination. Pogodin and Shevyrev in particular showed great interest in the culture and

history of Ukraine, or, as they called it, Little Russia. In the 1830s, Mykola Kostomarov, then a student at Kharkiv University in eastern Ukraine, had been strongly influenced by Stepan Shevyrev, whose lectures he attended. Shevyrev, who referred to Little Russia as Great Russia's elder sister, put a strong emphasis on nationality and encouraged the study of popular culture. But there was a problem, since 'nationality' meant different things in Moscow and Kharkiv. When Kostomarov went to the people to collect their lore, he had to speak to them in Ukrainian, and by 1839 he was already writing in that language. Kostomarov was not the first admirer of nationality to bring back texts from his field trip that were written in a language difficult to understand, if not entirely foreign, to enthusiasts of nationality in Moscow and St. Petersburg…

"Mikhail Pogodin saw cultural differences between Russians and Ukrainians that went beyond language and history. He wrote in 1845, 'The Great Russians live side by side with the Little Russians, profess one faith, have shared one fate and, for many years, one history. But how many differences there are between the Great Russians and the Little Russians!'

"By the mid-nineteenth century, the Slavophiles' belief in the unity of Great and Little Russia and their treatment of the latter as the fountainhead of Russian culture was being challenged by the Little Russians' search for a nationality of their own. Encouraged by like-minded individuals in Moscow and St. Petersburg to investigate and embrace issues of nationality, the Ukrainians brought to the salons of St. Petersburg and Moscow not only a language quite different from Russian but also a history distinct from that of the Russian people and state. It would soon become clear that language, history, and culture could be used not only to construct a past separate from that of the Great Russians but also a different future. In that new vision, Little Russia would turn into Ukraine, an entity still close to Russia but also very different and quite separate from it…"

7. THE JEWISH QUESTION

If the Polish problem was difficult to solve, the Jewish problem was even more intractable. The two nations had much in common: both were nations without states, distrustful of each other but united in their craving for national autonomy, both fiercely anti-Orthodox and both subjects of the same people, the Russians, whom they had both exploited in the not-so-distant past, when the Poles ruled Western Russia. The future of Europe, and Christian civilization in general, would to a large extent depend on how well Orthodox Russia would succeed in assimilating and neutralizing this breeding-ground of the Revolution…

In order to understand the Jewish problem, we need to go back in time… Throughout the medieval and early modern periods, the Jews had been forbidden to settle in Russia. From the beginning of the Muscovite kingdom, however, Jews had begun to infiltrate into Russia from Poland-Lithuania, where the Polish landowners had given them considerable privileges, employing them to collect very heavy taxes, fees, tolls and produce from the Russian serfs. In some cases the Poles even handed over churches and monasteries to the Jews, who would extort fees for the celebration of sacraments.

"In the 16th century," writes A.I. Solzhenitsyn, quoting Yury Hessen, "'the spiritual leadership of the Jewish world came to be concentrated in German-Polish Jewry… So as to prevent the possibility of the Jewish people being dissolved amidst the surrounding population, the spiritual leaders had from ages past introduced stipulations whose purpose was to isolate the people from close contact with their neighbours. Using the authority of the Talmud,… the Rabbis wrapped round the public and private life of the Jew with a complex web of prescriptions of a religio-social nature, which… prevented them getting close to people of other faiths.' Real and spiritual needs 'were brought in sacrifice to outdated forms of popular life', 'blind fulfilment of ritual was transformed for the people into the goal, as it were, of the existence of Jewry… Rabbinism, ossified in lifeless forms, continued to keep both the mind and the will of the people in fetters.'"

In 1648, the Ukrainian Cossacks and peasants rose up against their Polish and Jewish oppressors and appealed to the Tsar for help. The Tsarist armies triumphed, and by the treaty of Andrusovo in 1667 Eastern Ukraine was ceded – together with its Jewish population – to Russia. For the next hundred years, writes Janet Hartley, these Jews of the Russian empire "lived mostly in the Ukraine although a small Jewish community became established in Moscow. The government legislated to contain and control the Jewish

population within the empire's borders. Both Catherine I (1725-27) and Elizabeth (1741-62) attempted to ban Jews from Russia; one estimate is that 35,000 Jews were banished in 1741."

From the second half of the eighteenth century, however, the universalism and cosmopolitanism of the Enlightenment, together with the principles of human and national rights of the French revolution, led to the emancipation of the Jews, first in France, and then in most of the countries of Europe. This process was slow and accompanied by many reverses and difficulties, but inexorable. The only great power which firmly resisted it was *Russia*….

Contrary to popular myth, the myth of its being "the prison of the peoples", the record of the Russian empire in its treatment of various subject populations was in general good. We only have to look at the large number of Baltic German names among the senior officials of the empire, the very large measure of autonomy given to the Finns (and to the Poles before they rebelled), and the way in which Tatar khans and Georgian princes were fully assimilated (or rather: assimilated to the degree that *they* wanted). In fact, Russia was probably more liberal, and certainly less racist, in its treatment of its subject peoples than its contemporary rival, the supposedly "liberal" empire of Great Britain.

But the Jews presented certain intractable problems not found in the other peoples of the empire. The first problem was the sheer *number* of Jews who suddenly found themselves within its boundaries. Thus Hartley writes: "The empire acquired a further *c.* 250,000 Jews after the establishment of the Congress Kingdom of Poland in 1815. There was a substantial Jewish population in Bessarabia (11.3 per cent in 1863). In 1854, the Jewish population of the whole empire was estimated as 1,062,132." These numbers grew rapidly in the second half of the nineteenth century. And by the beginning of the twentieth century, according to Lebedev, *about half* the number of the Jews *in the whole world* were to be found in the Russian empire.

More fundamental, however, than the administrative problem presented by these large numbers was the fact that, as David Vital writes, "there were differences… between Russia and the other European states… in respect of the place of religion generally and what were taken to be the teachings of religion on what were unquestionably the state's affairs. It was not merely that in principle Russia continued to be held by its Autocrat and its minions to be a Christian state with a particular duty to uphold its own Orthodox Church. It was that, far from the matter of the state's specifically Christian duty slowly wasting away, as in the west, it continued actively to exercise the minds of Russia's rulers as one of the central criteria by which questions of public policy were to be judged and decided. The continuous search for an

effective definition of the role, quality, and ultimate purposes of the Autocracy itself was an enterprise which, considering the energy and seriousness with which it was pursued, sufficed in itself to distinguish Russia from its contemporaries. The programmes to which the state was committed and all its structures were under obligation to promote varied somewhat over time. But in no instance was there serious deviation from the rule that Russian Orthodoxy was and needed to remain a central and indispensable component of the ruling ethos. Nineteenth-century imperial Russia was therefore an ideological state in a manner and to a degree that had become so rare as to be virtually unknown in Europe and would not be familiar again for at least a century…"

Moreover, if Russia was the last ideological state in Europe, the large numbers of Ashkenazi Jews that came within the Russian empire between 1772 and 1815 constituted an ideological "state within the state" whose anti-christian books and kahal institutions made them bitterly hostile to everything that Russia stood for. To put it bluntly: if the Russians worshipped Christ, the Jews hated Him. And no amount of state intervention, whether in a liberal or illiberal direction, could resolve this basic contradiction or defuse the hostile sentiments it aroused on both sides. The situation was exacerbated by the fact that, unlike the Orthodox Christians, who are taught to recognise and obey secular authorities even if they are not Orthodox, and not only out of fear but for conscience's sake (Romans 13.1-4), the Jews ultimately recognised no authorities beside their own, rabbinical ones. And if they did obey the Gentile powers, it was only because they had been taught that resistance was counter-productive, not because these powers had any *moral* authority over them.

This led the Jew, writes Vital, "to be deeply sceptical of civil authority of *all* kinds… The lasting effect of such scepticism was to leave him peculiarly independent in mind and social outlook. Having no earthly masters to whom he thought he owed unquestioning political obedience (the special case of the Hasidic rebbe or zaddik and his devotees aside), '[the European Jew's] was… a spirit that, for his times, was remarkably free. Permitted no land, he had no territorial lord. Admitted to no guild, he was free of the authority of established master-craftsmen. Not being a Christian, he had neither bishop nor priest to direct him. And while he could be charged or punished for insubordination to state or sovereign, he could not properly be charged with disloyalty. Betrayal only entered into the life of the Jews in regard to their own community or, more broadly, to Jewry as a whole. It was to their own nation alone that they accepted that they owed undeviating loyalty.'"

The internal Jewish authority of the *kahal* was considered to be important and harmful by the Jews themselves – notably, the Polish Jew Hourwitz. The

Tsars were soon to make this discovery for themselves. Tsar Paul I appointed the poet Gavriil Romanovich Derzhavin to investigate why Belorussia had been afflicted by such a severe famine. After visiting Belorussia twice in 1799 and 1800, Derzhavin came to the conclusion that the main cause of the famine was the desperate poverty into which the Jewish tavern-keepers and money-lenders, in connivance with the Polish landowners, had reduced the Belorussian peasants.

But more importantly, writes Oleg Platonov, Derzhavin "noted the ominous role of the *kahals* – the organs of Jewish self-rule on the basis of the bigoted laws of the Talmud, which 'a well-constructed political body must not tolerate', as being a state within the state. Derzhavin discovered that the Jews, who considered themselves oppressed, established in the Pale of Settlement a secret Israelite kingdom divided into *kahal* districts with *kahal* administrations endowed with despotic power over the Jews which inhumanly exploited the Christians and their property on the basis of the Talmud. …

"Derzhavin also uncovered the concept of 'herem' – a curse which the *kahal* issued against all those who did not submit to the laws of the Talmud. This, according to the just evaluation of the Russian poet, was 'an impenetrable sacrilegious cover for the most terrible crimes'.

"In his note Derzhavin 'was the first to delineate a harmonious, integral programme for the resolution of the Jewish question in the spirit of Russian statehood, having in mind the unification of all Russian subjects on common ground'.

"Paul I, after reading the note, agreed with many of its positions and decorated the author. However, the tragic death of the Tsar as the result of an international Masonic conspiracy destroyed the possibility of resolving the Jewish question in a spirit favourable for the Russian people. The new Emperor, Alexander I, being under the influence of a Masonic environment, adopted a liberal position. In 1802 he created a special Committee for the improvement of the Jews, whose soul was the Mason Speransky, who was closely linked with the Jewish world through the well-known tax-farmer Perets, whom he considered his friend and with whom he lived.

"Another member of the committee was G.R. Derzhavin. As general-governor, he prepared a note 'On the removal of the deficit of bread in Belorussia, the collaring of the avaricious plans of the Jews, on their transformation, and other things'. Derzhavin's new note, in the opinion of specialists, was 'in the highest degree a remarkable document, not only as the work of an honourable, penetrating statesman, but also as a faithful

exposition of all the essential sides of Jewish life, which hinder the merging of this race with the rest of the population.'

"In the report of the official commission on the Jewish question which worked in the 1870s in the Ministry of the Interior, it was noted that at the beginning of the reign of Alexander I the government 'stood already on the ground of the detailed study of Jewry and the preparation that had begun had already at that time exposed such sides of the public institutions of this nationality which would hardly be tolerable in any state structure. But however often reforms were undertaken in the higher administrative spheres, every time some magical brake held up the completion of the matter.' This magical brake stopped Derzhavin's proposed reform of Jewry, which suggested the annihilation of the *kahals* in all the provinces populated by Jews, the removal of all *kahal* collections and the limitation of the influx of Jews to a certain percentage in relation to the Christian population, while the remaining masses were to be given lands in Astrakhan and New Russia provinces, assigning the poorest to re-settlement. Finally, he proposed allowing the Jews who did not want to submit to these restrictions freedom to go abroad. However, these measures were not confirmed by the government.

"Derzhavin's note and the formation of the committee elicited great fear in the Jewish world. From the published *kahal* documents of the Minsk Jewish society it becomes clear that the *kahals* and the 'leaders of the cities' gathered in an extraordinary meeting three days later and decided to sent a deputation to St. Petersburg with the aim of petitioning Alexander I to make no innovations in Jewish everyday life. But since this matter 'required great resources', a very significant sum was laid upon the whole Jewish population as a tax, refusal from which brought with it 'excommunication from the people' (*herem*). From a private note given to Derzhavin by one Belorussian landowner, it became known that the Jews imposed their herem also on the general procurator, uniting with it a curse through all the *kahals* 'as on a persecutor'. Besides, they collected 'as gifts' for this matter, the huge sum for that time of a million rubles and sent it to Petersburg, asking that 'efforts be made to remove him, Derzhavin, from his post, and if that was not possible, at any rate to make an attempt on his life'."

Not surprisingly, Tsar Alexander's Statute for the Jews of December 9, 1804 turned out to be fairly liberal – much more liberal than the laws of Frederick Augustus in Napoleon's Duchy of Warsaw. Its strictest provisions related to a ban on Jews' participation in the distilling and retailing of spirits. Also, "there was to be no relaxation of the ancient rule that Jews (negligible exceptions apart) were to be prevented from penetrating into 'inner Russia'. Provision was made for an eventual, but determined, attack on the rabbinate's ancient – but in the government's view presumptuous and unacceptable – practice of

adjudicating cases that went beyond the strict limits of the religious (as opposed to the civil and criminal domain), but also on rabbinical independence and authority generally...

"But the Jews themselves could take some comfort in it being expressly stated that there was to be no question of forcible conversion to Christianity; that they were not to be oppressed or harassed in the observance of their faith and in their general social activities; that the private property of the Jews remained inviolable; and that Jews were not to be exploited or enserfed. They were, on the contrary, to enjoy the same, presumably full protection of the law that was accorded other subjects of the realm. They were not to be subject to the legal jurisdiction of the landowners on whose estates they might happen to be resident. And they were encouraged in every way the Committee could imagine – by fiscal and other economic incentives, for example, by the grant of land and loans to develop it, by permission to move to the New Russian Territories in the south – to undergo decisive and (so it was presumed) irreversible change in the two central respects which both Friezel and Derzhavin had indeed, and perfectly reasonably, regarded as vital: education and employment. In this they were to be encouraged very strongly; but they were not to be forced…"

However, the liberal Statute of 1804 was never fully implemented, and was succeeded by stricter measures towards the end of Alexander's reign and in the reign of his successor, Nicholas I. There were many reasons for this. Among them, of course, was Napoleon's invasion of Russia in 1812, which, if it had been successful, would have united the Western Sephardic Jews with the Eastern Ashkenazi Jews in a single State, free, emancipated, and under their own legally convened Sanhedrin. But not only did Napoleon not succeed: the invasion of Russia was the graveyard of his empire. In 1813, and again in 1815, the Russian armies entered Paris. Nor did the Jews receive emancipation from the great powers at the Congress of Vienna, which was dominated by the Tsar, although their situation had made it onto the agenda. From now on, the chief target of the Jews' hatred in both East and West would be the Russian Empire…

But the main reason for the tightening of Russian policy was "the Jews' abhorrence of Christianity, the intensely negative light in which non-Jewish society had always been regarded, and the deeply ingrained suspicion and fear in which all forms of non-Jewish authority were commonly held." As a result, in the whole of the 19th century only 69,400 Jews converted to Orthodoxy. The Russian Tsars could not ignore this hatred eating away at the empire's innards…

The Tsars' gradual tightening of policy had little or no effect on the basic

problem of religious and social antagonism. As Platonov writes: "The statute of the Jews worked out in 1804, which took practically no account of Derzhavin's suggestion, continued to develop the isolation of the Jewish communities on Russian soil, that is, it strengthened the *kahals* together with their fiscal, judicial, police and educational independence. However, the thought of re-settling the Jews out of the western region continued to occupy the government after the issuing of the statute in 1804. A consequence of this was the building in the New Russian area (from 1808) of Jewish colonies in which the government vainly hoped to 're-educate' the Jews, and, having taught them to carry out productive agricultural labour, to change in this way the whole structure of their life. Nevertheless, even in these model colonies the kahal-rabbinic administration retained its former significance and new settlements isolated themselves from the Christian communities; they did not intend to merge with them either in a national or in a cultural sense. The government not only did not resist the isolation of the Jews, but even founded for them the so-called Israelite Christians (that is, Talmudists who had converted to Orthodoxy). A special committee existed from 1817 to 1833."

Tsar Alexander's project of settling the Jews as farmers on the new territories of Southern Russia had proved to be a failure, in spite of very generous terms offered to them – terms that were not offered to Russian peasants.

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In spite of this failure, writes Solzhenitsyn, in his *Statute* of 1835, which replaced Alexander's of 1804, Nicholas I "not only did not abandon Jewish agriculture, but even broadened it, placing in the first place in the building of Jewish life 'the setting up of the Jews on the basis of rules that would open to them a free path to the acquisition of a prosperous existence by the practice of agriculture and industry and to the gradual education of their youth, while at the same time cutting off for them excuses for idleness and unlawful trades'. If before a preliminary contribution of 400 roubles was required for each family [settling in the new territories] from the Jewish community, now without any condition 'every Jew is allowed "at any time" to pass over to agriculture', and all his unpaid taxes would immediately be remitted to him and to the community; he would be allowed to receive not only State lands for an unlimited period, but also, within the bounds of the Pale of Settlement, to buy, sell and lease lands. Those passing over to agriculture were freed from poll-tax for 25 years, from land tax for 10, and from liability to military service – for 50. Nor could any Jew 'be forced to pass over to agriculture'. Moreover, 'trades and crafts practised in their village life' were legalised.

"(150 years passed. And because these distant events had been forgotten,

an enlightened and learned physicist formulated Jewish life at that time as 'the Pale of Settlement in conjunction with a ban [!] on peasant activity'. But the historian-publicist M.O. Gershenzon has a broader judgement: 'Agriculture is forbidden to the Jew by his national spirit, for, on becoming involved with the land, a man can more easily become rooted to the place'.)"

In general, the *Statute* of 1835 "'did not lay any new restrictions on the Jews', as the *Jewish encyclopaedia* puts it in a restrained way. And if we look into the details, then according to the new *Statute* 'the Jews had the right to acquire any kind of real estate, including populated estates, and carry out any kind of trade on the basis of rights identical with those granted Russian subjects', although only within the bounds of the Pale of Settlement. The *Statute* of 1835 defended all the rights of the Jewish religion, and introduced awards for rabbis and the rights of the merchants of the first guild. A rational age for marriage (18 and 16 years) was established [contrary to the rabbis, who married off young Jews at much younger ages]. Measures were undertaken that Jewish dress should not be so different, separating Jews from the surrounding population. Jews were directed to productive means of employment (forbidding the sale of wine on credit and on the security of household effects), all kinds of manufacturing activity (including the farming of wine distilleries). Keeping Christians in servitude was forbidden only for constant service, but it was allowed 'for short jobs' without indication of exactly how long, and also 'for assisting in arable farming, gardening and work in kitchen gardens', which was a mockery of the very idea of 'Jewish agriculture'. The *Statute* of 1835 called on Jewish youth to get educated [up to then the rabbis had forbidden even the learning of Russian. No restrictions were placed on the entry of Jewish to secondary and higher educational institutions. Jews who had received the degree of doctor in any branch of science… were given the right to enter government service. (Jewish doctors had that right even earlier.) As regards local self-government, the *Statute* removed the Jews' previous restrictions: now they could occupy posts in dumas, magistracies and town councils 'on the same basis as people of other confessions are elected to them'. (True, some local authorities, especially in Lithuania, objected to this: the head of the town on some days had to lead the residents into the church, and how could this be a Jew? Or how could a Jew be a judge, since the oath had to be sworn on the cross? The opposition proved to be strong, and by a decree of 1836 it was established for the western provinces that Jews could occupy only a third of the posts in magistracies and town councils.) Finally, with regard to the economically urgent question linked with cross-frontier smuggling, which was undermining State interests, the *Statute* left the Jews living on the frontiers where they were, but forbad any new settlements.

"For a State that held millions of its population in serfdom, all this cannot

be characterised as a cruel system…"

This is an important point in view of the persistent western and Jewish propaganda that Nicholas was a persecutor of the Jews. And in this light even the most notorious restriction on the Jews – that they had to live in the Pale of Settlement – looks generous. For while a peasant had to live in his village, the Jews could wander throughout the vast territory of the Pale, an area the size of France and Germany combined; while for those who were willing to practise agriculture, or had acquired education, they could go even further afield.

Of particular importance were the Tsar's measures encouraging Jewish education, by which he hoped to remove the barriers built up around the Jews by the rabbis. "Already in 1831 he told the 'directing' committee that 'among the measures that could improve the situation of the Jews, it was necessary to pay attention to their correction by teaching… by the building of factories, by the banning of early marriage, by a better management of the *kahals*,… by a change of dress'. And in 1840, on the founding the 'Committee for the Defining of Measures for the Radical Transformation of the Jews in Russia', one of its first aims was seen to be: 'Acting on the moral formation of the new generation of Jews by the establishment of Jewish schools in a spirit opposed to the present Talmudic teaching'…"

"The masses, fearing coercive measures in the sphere of religion, did not go.

"However, the school reform took its course in… 1844, in spite of the extreme resistance of the ruling circles among the *kahals*. (Although 'the establishment of Jewish schools by no means envisaged a diminution in the numbers of Jews in the general school institutions; on the contrary, it was often pointed out that the general schools had to be, as before, open for Jews'.) Two forms of State Jewish schools ['on the model of the Austrian elementary schools for Jews'] were established: two-year schools, corresponding to Russian parish schools, and four-year schools, corresponding to *uyezd* schools. In them only Jewish subjects were taught by Jewish teachers. (As one inveterate revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, evaluated it: 'The crown-bearing monster ordered them [the Jews] to be taught Russian letters'.) For many years Christians were placed at the head of these schools; only much later were Jews also admitted.

"'The majority of the Jewish population, faithful to traditional Jewry, on learning or guessing the secret aim of Uvarov [the minister of enlightenment], looked on the educational measures of the government as one form of persecution. (But Uvarov, in seeking possible ways of bringing the Jews and

the Christian population closer together through the eradication 'of prejudices instilled by the teaching of the Talmud', wanted to exclude it completely from the educational curriculum, considering it to be an antichristian codex.) In their unchanging distrust of the Russian authorities, the Jewish population continued for quite a few years to keep away from these schools, experiencing 'school-phobia': 'Just as the population kept away from military service, so it was saved from the schools, fearing to give their children to these seed-beds of "free thought"'. Prosperous Jewish families in part sent other, poor people's children to the State schools instead of their own… And if by 1855 70 thousand Jewish children were studying in the 'registered' *heders* [rabbinic schools], in the State schools of both types there were 3,200."

This issue of education was to prove to be crucial. For when, in the next reign, the Jews did overcome their "school-phobia", and send their children to the State schools, these had indeed become seed-beds of "free-thinking" and revolution. It is ironic and tragic that it was the Jews' education in Russian schools that taught them how to overthrow the Russian Orthodox Autocracy…

8. THE CRIMEAN WAR

However legitimate the Tsar might consider most European governments (except Napoleon III's), this was not how they looked at him. The 1848 revolution, while in general unsuccessful, had changed the balance of forces in Europe. Gratitude to Russia for keeping the peace by defeating the Hungarian revolutionaries, never strong, had completely disappeared with the rise of a new generation of leaders. In 1851 the exiled Hungarian revolutionary Kossuth denounced Russian "despotism" in front of a cheering crowd in London. Meanwhile, the new French Emperor Napoleon III was looking to challenge the Vienna settlement of 1815 and divide Austria and Russia.

Nevertheless, it was a remarkable *volte-face* for these countries to ally themselves with the Ottoman empire against a Christian state, Russia, which in no way threatened them...

One factor making for instability was the gradual weakening of the power of Turkey, "the sick man of Europe", in the Tsar's phrase. Clearly, if Turkey collapsed, its subject peoples of Orthodox Christian faith would look to Russia to liberate them. But the Western Powers were determined to prevent this, which would threaten their hegemony in the Eastern Mediterranean and greatly increase the power of their rival, Russia.

There were also religious rivalries. The Tsar, as head of the Third Rome, saw himself as the natural protector of the Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman empire, a position that Catherine the Great's treaties with the Turks had guaranteed. But the Catholics, whose main political protector was France, were not prepared to allow him to play this role.

"The spark to the tinderbox," writes Trevor Royle, "was the key to the main door of the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. By tradition, history, and a common usage which had been built up over the centuries, the great key was in the possession of the monks of the eastern, or Greek Orthodox... Church; they were the guardians of the grotto in which lay the sacred manger where Christ himself was... born. That state of affairs was contested with equal fervour by their great rivals, the monks of the Roman Catholic, or Latin, church who had been palmed off with the keys to the lesser inner doors to the narthex (the vestibule between the porch and the nave). There was also the question of whether or not a silver star adorned with the arms of France should be permitted to stand in the Sanctuary of the Nativity, but in the spring of 1852 the rivals' paramount thoughts were concentrated on the possession of the great key to the church's main west door…

"[Alexander] Kinglake wrote: 'When the Emperor of Russia sought to keep for his Church the holy shrines of Palestine, he spoke on behalf of fifty millions of brave, pious, devoted subjects, of whom thousands for the sake of the cause would joyfully risk their lives. From the serf in his hut, even up to the great Tsar himself, the faith professed was the faith really glowing in his heart.'"

"Nicolas I had both temporal and spiritual reasons for wanting to extend his protection of the Eastern Church within the Ottoman Empire. Napoleon III's were rather different. Having dismissed the French parliament he needed all the support he could get, most especially from the Roman Catholics, before he could declare himself emperor. It suited him therefore to have France play a greater role in Palestine and 'to put an end to these deplorable and too-frequent quarrels about the possession of the Holy Places'. To that end the Marquis de Lavalette, his ambassador to the Porte - or the Sublime Porte, the court or government of the Ottoman Empire - insisted that the Turks honour the agreement made in 1740 that confirmed that France had 'sovereign authority' in the Holy Land. Otherwise, hinted de Lavalette, force might have to be used.

"On 9 February 1852 the Porte agreed the validity of the Latin claims but no sooner had the concession been made than the Turks were forced to bow once more, this time to Russian counter-claims. Basing his argument on an agreement, or firman, of 1757 which restored Greek rights in Palestine and on the Treaty of Kutchuk-Kainarji (1774) which gave Russia protection of the Christian religion within the Ottoman Empire, Nicholas's ambassador succeeded in getting a new firman ratifying the privileges of the Greek Church. This revoked the agreement made to the French who responded by backing up their demands with a show of force.

"Later that summer, much to Nicholas's fury and to Britain's irritation, Napoleon III ordered the 90-gun steam-powered battleship *Charlemagne* to sail through the Dardanelles. This was a clear violation of the London Convention of 1841 which kept the Straits closed to naval vessels, but it also provided a telling demonstration of French sea power. It was nothing less than gunboat diplomacy and it seemed to work. Impressed by the speed and strength of the French warship, and persuaded by French diplomacy and money, Sultan Abd-el-Medjid listened ever more intently to the French demands. At the beginning of December he gave orders that the keys to the Church of the Nativity were to be surrendered to the Latins and that the French-backed church was to have supreme authority over the Holy Places. On 22 December a new silver star was brought from Jaffa and as Kinglake wrote, in great state

'the keys of the great door of the church, together with the keys of the sacred manger, were handed over to the Latins'.

"Napoleon III had scored a considerable diplomatic victory. His subjects were much gratified, but in so doing he had also prepared the ground for a much greater and more dangerous confrontation. Given the strength of Russian religious convictions Tsar Nicholas was unwilling to accept the Sultan's decision - which he regarded as an affront not just to him but to the millions of Orthodox Christians under his protection - and he was determined to have it reversed, if need be by using force himself."

In October, 1852, the Tsar arrived in Kiev and confided to the metropolitan: "I do not want to shed the blood of the faithful sons of the fatherland, but our vainglorious enemies are forcing me to bare my sword. My plans are not yet made - no! But my heart feels that the time is nearing and they will soon be brought to fulfillment."

Seeking advice, the Tsar asked if there were any holy elders in Kiev. The Metropolitan mentioned Hieroschemamonk Theophilus. They set off there immediately. On the way, they saw Blessed Theophilus lying by the side of the road in the middle of an ant-hill, not moving. His arms were folded on his chest crosswise, as in death, and his eyes were completely closed. Ants swarmed in masses all over his body and face, but he, as if feeling nothing, pretended to be dead. Puzzled, the Tsar and the Metropolitan returned to Kiev.

Russian troops moved into the Romanian Principalities, and on July 2, 1853, the Tsar proclaimed: "By the occupation of the Principalities we desire such security as will ensure the restoration of our dues [in Palestine]. It is not conquest that we seek but satisfaction for a just right so clearly infringed." As he told the British ambassador in St. Petersburg, Seymour: "You see what my position is. I am the Head of a People of the Greek religion, our co-religionists of Turkey look up to me as their natural protector, and these are claims which it is impossible for me to disregard. I have the conviction that good right is on my side, I should therefore begin a War, such as that which now impends, without compunction and should be prepared to carry it on, as I have before remarked to you, as long as there should be a rouble in the Treasury or a man in the country."

Nevertheless, when the Powers drew up a compromise "Note", Nicholas promptly accepted it. However, the Turks rejected it, having been secretly assured of Franco-British support. On October 4, 1853 they delivered an ultimatum to the Russians to leave the Principalities within a fortnight. When the Tsar rejected the ultimatum, war broke out. On the same day A.F.

Tiutcheva noted in her diary: "A terrible struggle is being ignited, gigantic opposing forces are entering into conflict with each other: the East and the West, the Slavic world and the Latin world, the Orthodox Church in her struggle not only with Islam, but also with the other Christian confessions, which, taking the side of the religion of Mohammed, are thereby betraying their own vital principle."

The British, the French and later the Sardinians joined the Turks. In March, 1854, the British Foreign Secretary Lord Palmerston in a secret memorandum prepared for the cabinet dreamed of the Russian empire's "dismemberment. Finland would be restored to Sweden, the Baltic provinces would go to Prussia, and Poland would become a sizable kingdom. Austria would renounce her Italian possessions but gain the Danubian principalities and possibly even Bessarabia in return, and the Ottoman empire would regain the Crimea and Georgia."

As A.S. Khomiakov wrote: "Whatever political bases and excuses there may be for the struggle that is convulsing Europe now, it is impossible not to notice, even at the most superficial observation, that on one of the warring sides stand exclusively peoples belonging to Orthodoxy, and on the other - Romans and Protestants, gathered around Islam." And he quoted from an epistle of the Catholic Archbishop of Paris Sibur, who assured the French that the war with Russia "is not a political war, but a holy war; not a war of states or peoples, but solely a religious war". All other reasons were "in essence no more than excuses". The true reason was "the necessity to drive out the error of Photius [the *Filioque* or "schismatic" Orthodoxy]; to subdue and crush it". "That is the recognized aim of this new crusade, and such was the hidden aim of all the previous crusades, even if those who participated in them did not admit it."

The war went badly for Russia; and on February 18, 1855, shortly after receiving the news of the defeat at Evpatoria, the Tsar, worn out and intensely grieved by the losses in the war, died. (According to one version, he was poisoned by the medic Mandt on the orders of Napoleon III. According to another, he "committed suicide by cold", going outside and unbuttoning his jacket when he had a cold.) Metropolitan Philaret of Kiev asked his valet whether he remembered the trip with the Tsar to Blessed Theophilus, and the fool-for-Christ's strange behaviour. "Up to now I could not understand his strange behaviour. Now, the prophecy of the Starets is as clear as God's day. The ants were the malicious enemies of our fatherland, trying to torment the great body of Russia. The arms folded on his chest and the closed eyes of Theophilus were the sudden, untimely death of our beloved Batiushka-Tsar."

PART II. REFORM (1855-1881)

I will dash them one against another, even the fathers and the sons together, saith the Lord.
Jeremiah 13.14.

9. THE PEACE OF PARIS

The death of Tsar Nicholas, which was soon followed by the accession to the throne of Tsar Alexander II and the end of the Crimean War, heralded major reforms in both the internal and external policies of Russia. These changes, while aiming to restore Russia's position vis-á-vis the West and her own westernizing intelligentsia, in fact revealed the increased influence of the West in the government's own thinking. They would therefore lay the foundations for the reaction against western influence that we see in the reigns of Alexander III and Nicholas II. But even during the period of reaction western influence continued to grow. And so the revolution proceeded to its inexorable climax...

The passing of the Orthodox Christian emperor was followed very soon by the birth of a utopian, pseudo-Christian ideology that would prepare the way for the anti-Christian ideology and empire of the Bolsheviks… On March 4 a young soldier called Lev Tolstoy wrote in his diary: "Yesterday a conversation about divinity and faith led me to a great and stupendous idea, the realisation of which I feel capable of devoting my whole life to. This idea is the foundation of a new religion corresponding to the development of mankind – the religion of Christ, but purged of dogma and mystery, a practical religion, not promising future bliss but providing bliss on earth…"

In his *Sebastopol Sketches* Tolstoy made unflattering comparisons between the western and the Russian armies. His comments on the defenders of Sebastopol were especially unjust: "We have no army, we have a horde of slaves cowed by discipline, ordered about by thieves and slave traders. This horde is not an army because it possesses neither any real loyalty to faith, tsar and fatherland – words that have been so much misused! – nor valour, nor military dignity. All it possesses are, on the one hand, passive patience and repressed discontent, and on the other, cruelty, servitude and corruption."

Tolstoy was to cast his ferociously cynical eye over much more than the army in the course of his long life. The author of *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina* would have been well advised to content himself with those great achievements. But, idolized by the public, he would proudly subject almost every aspect of Russian life and faith to his withering scorn. For, as his friend, the poet Athanasius Fet noted, he was distinguished by an "automatic opposition to all generally accepted opinions". In this he was truly the forerunner and, as Lenin said, "the mirror" of the Russian revolution…

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The Peace of Paris, ending the Crimean War, was signed in March, 1856. In purely military terms, the war had not been such a disaster for Russia as is often made out: if the Russians had lost Sebastopol they had gained Kars, and the enemy had not set foot in Russia proper. The situation had been more perilous for the Russians in 1812, and yet they had gone on to enter Paris in triumph. As Tsar Alexander II wrote to the Russian commander Gorchakov after the fall of Sebastopol: "Sebastopol is not Moscow, the Crimea is not Russia. Two years after the burning of Moscow, our victorious troops were in Paris. We are still the same Russians and God is with us." And within a generation, Russian armies were at the gates of Constantinople…

However, the fact remained that while the war of 1812-14 had ended in the rout of Russia's enemies, this had not happened in 1854-56. Russia had "not yet been beaten half enough", according to the British Foreign Minister Lord Palmerston; but her losses had been far greater than those of the Allies, and the war had revealed that Russia was well behind the Allies in transport and weaponry, especially rifles. (The gap in both spheres was still critical in 1914). Moreover, Russia's primary war-aim had not been achieved: while the status quo in the church of the Nativity in Bethlehem and the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem had been restored, Russia could no longer claim to be the exclusive guardian of the rights of Orthodox Christians in the Ottoman Empire, but shared this right with four other great powers.

Another important long-term consequence was the destruction of the Holy Alliance of Christian monarchist powers established by Tsar Alexander I in 1815. The revolution, whose most recent explosion in 1848 had been defeated largely through the intervention of Tsar Nicholas I in Hungary, was on the march again, and both Christianity and Monarchism were now on the retreat. The very fact that the peace was signed in Paris showed how the balance of power had shifted: Tsar Nicholas I had not recognized the legitimacy of the French government, considering it inherently revolutionary, but Tsar Alexander II was forced both to recognize it and to make concessions to it…

But perhaps the most profound consequence was a lowering of the morale of the Orthodox nation. The simple people, following the Tsar and the Church, had been enthusiastic for the war, considering it to be holy; the soldiers in the Crimea had shown feats of heroism; and the intercession of the Mother of God had clearly been seen in the deliverance of Odessa through her "Kasperovskaya" icon. However, examples of unbelief had been seen among the commanding officers at Sebastopol; the commander-in-chief Prince Menshikov, a Mason, was accused of defeatist tactics; some of the *intelligentsy*, such as B.N. Chicherin, openly scoffed at the idea of a holy war; and the nation as a whole was not as united behind their Tsar as it had been in 1812.

The reputation of Tsar Nicholas I suffered, and criticisms of almost every aspect of the tsarist system became louder.

One scoffer was a young officer who was soon to make a worldwide reputation in another field - Count Leo Tolstoy. In his *Sebastopol Sketches* he made unflattering comparisons between the western and the Russian armies. His comments on the defenders of Sebastopol were especially unjust: "We have no army, we have a horde of slaves cowed by discipline, ordered about by thieves and slave traders. This horde is not an army because it possesses neither any real loyalty to faith, tsar and fatherland - words that have been so much misused! - nor valour, nor military dignity. All it possesses are, on the one hand, passive patience and repressed discontent, and on the other, cruelty, servitude and corruption."

Tolstoy was to cast his ferociously cynical eye over much more than the army in the course of his long life as a novelist and publicist. Idolized by the public, he would subject almost every aspect of Russian life and faith to his withering scorn. For, as the poet Athanasius Fet noted, he was distinguished by an "automatic opposition to all generally accepted opinions"; and in this way was in a real sense "the mirror of the Russian revolution".

The leading Slavophiles of the prewar period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, and with their deaths the ideological struggle shifted in favour of the westerners. While the war of 1812 had united the nation behind the Tsar, the Crimean war was followed by increasing division and dissension.

The conclusion drawn at the end of the war by Konstantin Aksakov was that Russia was in danger, not so much from an external as from an internal foe, from “the spirit of little faith… The struggle, the real struggle between East and West, Russia and Europe, is in ourselves and not at our borders…”

Another Slavophile, Yury Samarin, analysed the situation as follows: “We were defeated not by the external forces of the Western alliance, but by our own internal weakness… Stagnation of thought, depression of productive forces, the rift between government and people, disunity between social classes and the enslavement of one of them to another… prevent the government from deploying all the means available to it and, in emergency, from being able to count on mobilising the strength of the nation.”

10. THE EMANCIPATION OF THE SERFS

Although the State did not tackle the fundamental ills of society in the 1860s, it did show a remarkable degree of activity for a supposedly anachronistic "dinosaur". Moreover, its acts were only indirectly aimed at shoring up the Autocracy as such, being rather a series of liberal reforms unparalleled in any country on earth - and undertaken by the tsar himself. They were elicited by the various inadequacies in Russian life exposed by the Crimean War.

The first of these social inadequacies was serfdom. "The unsuccessful conclusion of the Crimean war," writes A.I. Sheparneva, "was connected by the Westerners with God's punishment striking Russia for all her vices and absurdities, by which they understood the existence in the country of serfdom and the despotic character of the State administration. Despotism and serfdom, as the Westerners noted, hindered the normal development of the country, preserving its economic, political and military backwardness."

According to Andrew Marr, "Russian serfdom had unique aspects that made Russia feel fundamentally different from Western European societies. For a start, there was no ethnic divide in Russia between owner and serf. They were all the same mix, mostly Slav with some Tatar and sometimes some German. Master, mistress and servants looked alike and had similar names. Serfs, living for generations on the same dark soil, sharing the old stories and the old music, devoutly adhering to the Orthodox religion, seemed to many liberal Russian landowners more 'real', more authentically Russian than they were themselves. To numerous writers and intellectuals Russia seemed uniquely cursed, but when at times radicals tried to 'go towards' the serfs and befriend them, these skeptical, conservative-minded peasants regarded them with bafflement.

"For tens of thousands of poorer landowners there was not even a big cultural divide between them and their human 'property'. Serfs cooked in the master's kitchen, suckled and brought up his children, told stories around the fire and taught the lore of the countryside to the little noble growing up amongst them. They shared hunting trips. Serfs could be talented craftworkers, musicians, decorator and builders that their owners relied on for goods and services, as better-off Western Europeans relied on free, waged workers. Landowners could be asked by the patriarchs of serf families to resolve family disputes. So there was an intimacy in Russian serfdom as experienced in houses and villages remote from the cities, that some Russian landowners felt to be more embarrassing and more emotionally touching than

rural servitude in some other places…"

The weakness of the system was the often cruel behaviour of the landowners, who had begun to lose their feeling of duty both to the state and to their serfs. The peasants, correspondingly, began to see their obedience to the nobles as a burden that was not justified, as in the past, by the defence of the land. As such, the formal structure probably had to change in view of the change in its spiritual content.

Although there were good landowners as well as bad, and although, as English observers noted, the Russian peasants were on the whole richer than their British counterparts, the fact remains that the lot of the serf was undoubtedly a wretched one in many cases.

He was completely dependent on his noble owner, who could exploit him with little fear of punishment. Thus Sir Richard Evans writes: "Russian noble landowners frequently lived away from their estates. They spent much of their time and money in St. Petersburg or in French resorts and central European spas, running up enormous debts at the gambling table. Even if they were not indebted or mortgaged up to the hilt, they often saw their estates as little more than sources of income to sustain their lifestyle in the big city… What mattered indeed was the powerlessness of the enserfed. There were estates where peasants were beaten or whipped by their lord, or put in an iron collar if they disobeyed his orders…"

However, serfs, unlike slaves, had rights as well as duties. "Law and custom required the seigneur to provide for his serfs in hard times, to care for the sick, the elderly and the feeble-minded if their families were unable to look after them, and to feed the serfs and their draught animals while they were working for him. In many areas the serfs had the right to graze their animals on the seigneur's pastures, to glean the pickings from harvested fields on his estate, to send their pigs to root in the lord's forest, and to enter his forest to cut wood. In turn, the seigneur usually had the right to graze his animals on the village common land and make use of the common forests.

"Encompassed as they were by a web of rights and duties, serfs could still be bought and sold along with the land they rented or owned. If the seigneur sold an estate, the serfs on it passed to the new owner. The state often gave tacit approval to the practice of selling serfs on their own without land, as implied in a Russian law that banned the use of the hammer at public auctions of serfs, or in a regulation of 1841 that made it illegal to sell parents and their unmarried children separately from one another. In Russia serfs were not just tillers of the soil; increasingly, they were enrolled as domestic servants, footmen, coachmen, cooks and much more besides…"

Serfdom arose in the sixteenth century as a result of military needs. "Before then," writes Max Hayward, peasants "had been free to leave their masters every year, by tradition, on St. George's day in November. The introduction of serfdom meant that the peasants were bound to the land in the same way and for the same reasons as their masters were bound to the czar's service. During the eighteenth century, however, just as the privileges of the landowners were made absolute, so were the rights of their serfs whittled away until they became virtually slaves who could - and, notoriously, often were - bought and sold, even if meant separating them from their families. Perhaps the worst aspect of a serf's life was that - from the time of Peter the Great - he could be sent into the army for twenty-five years..."

"With the military character of the state," wrote St. Ignaty Brianchaninov, Bishop of the Black Sea (+1867) "it was impossible for the military class not to occupy the first place in the state. In particular in ancient and middle-period Russia the military element absorbed and overshadowed all other elements...

"The necessity of muzzling the self-will of the simple people and the impossibility of having a police force in an unorganized state forced Tsar Boris Godunov to tie the peasants to the lands. Then all the Russian peasants became unfree...

"From the time of Alexander I views on the subject changed: the state finally became organized, a police force consisting of officials was established everywhere, the people began to emerge from their condition of childhood, received new ideas, felt new needs. The nobility began to chafe at being guardians of the peasants, the peasants - at the restrictions on their liberty, at their patriarchal way of life. All this began to appear and express itself strongly in the second half of the reign of Emperor Nicholas I."

Tsar Nicholas I had long planned to emancipate the serfs, and was able to improve the lot of the State serfs considerably. Thus L.A. Tikhomirov wrote: "Under Emperor Nicholas I the government undertook a restructuring of the State peasants. The Emperor made a very good choice for the executor of his thought in Count Kiselev, one of the greatest statesmen that Russia has ever given birth to. Thus one of the most remarkable social organizations in our history was created. Lands the size of the whole of Europe were united in the hands of the State, the peasants were abundantly endowed [with them], and the system of repatriations gave an exit to new generations of the farming class. A remarkable system of national provision for the struggle against poor harvests was created. The improvement of the farming culture of 20 million peasants became the object of obligatory and conscious work on the part of

the ministry. Moreover, the peasants were personally free, and their communities were ruled by men chosen by themselves. After two decades of effort this extensive organization was finally put on its feet."

On his deathbed Tsar Nicholas had bequeathed the task of emancipating the peasant to his successor, Alexander II. With the support of his sister Elena, the new tsar set about the task with zeal. "It is better to abolish serfdom from above," he said to the reluctant nobles, "than wait for it to abolish itself from below." For the serfs were becoming violent... "There were 148 outbreaks of peasant unrest in 1826-34," writes Eric Hobsbawm, "216 in 1835-44, 348 in 1844-54, culminating in the 474 outbreaks of the last years preceding the emancipation of 1861." And Ronald Seth writes: "A Russian historian, Vasily Semevsky, who died in 1916, using official records as a basis, claimed that there were 550 peasant uprisings in the sixty years of the nineteenth century prior to liberation; while a later Soviet historian, Inna Ignatovich, insists, upon equally valid records, that there were in fact 1,467 such rebellions in this period. And in addition to these uprisings serfs deserted their masters in hundreds and thousands, sometimes in great mass movement, when rumours circulated that freedom could be found 'somewhere in the Caucasus'."

These disturbances were not caused by poverty alone. "The peasants," wrote the senator, Ya. A. Soloviev, "either were disturbed in whole regions by false rumours about freedom, or were running away from cruel landlords, or resisted the decrees of unjust landowners. The landlords feared both the government and the peasants. In a word, serfdom was beginning to shake and with each day became more and more unsuitable: both for the peasants, and for the landlords, and for the government."

The peasants understood their relationship with their noble masters to be: "we are yours, but the land is ours", or even: "we are yours, and you are ours". While this was unacceptable to the Tsar, he did accept that "emancipation was, in [Prince Sergius] Volkonsky's words, a 'question of justice, a moral and a Christian obligation, for every citizen that loves his Fatherland.' As the Decembrist explained in a letter to Pushkin, the abolition of serfdom was 'the least the state could do to recognize the sacrifice the peasantry has made in the last two wars: it is time to recognize that the Russian peasant is a citizen as well'."

"'The great matter of the emancipation is almost done,' Alexander told Bariatinsky, 'and to be completed has only to go through the State Council.' On 27 January 1861, Alexander addressed the Council: 'You can change details but the fundamental must remain unaltered… The autocracy established serfdom and it's up to the autocracy to abolish it.' The decree was

approved."

The emancipation manifesto was published on February 19, 1861.

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The essence of the reform consisted in freeing twenty-two million serfs from their noble lords while enabling them to buy the land they tilled. The government would immediately pay the lords 80% of the value of the land by wiping out their debts, while the peasants, having been given their freedom *gratis,* would be given a 49-year period within which to pay for the land at a cheap rate of interest. The remaining 20% would be paid by the peasants directly to the landowners in cash payments or labour with the aid of generous loans from the government.

Bishop Ignaty Brianchaninov saod that the emperor "has found the matter already prepared and has found it necessary to change the form of administration of landowners' peasants. What is the essential significance of the improvement in the peasants' way of life? It is the change in the form of their administration. They are being given freedom, but not self-will. They are coming out from under the jurisdiction of the landowners as if from under the supervisions of educators and guardians, into a relationship of personal service to the state."

The reform was in general well received. Thus Bishop Ignaty saw it as "a most happy initiative, a majestic order amazing Europe". He argued: "1. That both the Word of God and the Church - both the Universal Church and the Russian Church - in the persons of the Holy Fathers, has never said anything at all about the abolition of civil slavery, that there is nothing in common between spiritual and civil freedom, that both slaves and masters were constantly taught by the Church the most exact and conscientious fulfilment of their obligations, that the violators of Christ's commandment on love were subject to rebukes and exhortations.

"2. That the emancipation of slaves has always been recognized by the Church as a good deed, a deed of mercy, a deed of brotherly Christian love.

"3. The most pious Russian Autocrat has indicated to the class of the nobility the accomplishing of a great Christian work, a work of love. The Church invokes the blessing of God upon the great work of the fatherland with her warmest prayers. Her pastors invite the nobility to noble self-renunciation, to sacrifice, to the immediate sacrifice of material goods for the sake of moral goods, while they instruct the peasants to accept this gift of the

Tsar with due veneration and humility - the true indications that the gift will be used wisely and usefully.

"But one must not think that civil liberty morally exalts only the peasants: the class of the nobility must unfailingly enter onto a higher level of moral achievement in renouncing the ownership of slaves. That is the characteristic of self-sacrifice and the offering of material goods as a sacrifice for spiritual goods: it exalts, changes and perfects man."

According to Dostoyevsky, far from undermining the traditional bonds of society, emancipation in fact strengthened the bond between the Tsar and the people, the union in faith and love which was at the very heart of Holy Russia. For the peasants had always looked to the Tsar as their father and protector against the greed of the landowners and officials. They had been expecting the Tsar to liberate them, and their expectations had been fulfilled.

For Dostoyevsky, as Igor Volgin writes, "the reform of 1861 created a historical precedent of exceptional importance. It presented an example of voluntary renunciation of an age-old historical injustice, a peaceful resolution of a social conflict that threatened to have terrible consequences. In this sense the emancipation of the peasants was as it were the first step to 'the Russian resolution of the question': the action taken from above *hinted* at the possibility of the creation of a world-order that would be founded on justice - and only on justice."

"Is the saying that 'the Tsar is their father' a mere phrase, an empty sound in Russia? He who so believes understands nothing about Russia! Nay, this is a profound and most original idea, - a live and mighty organism of the people merging with the Tsar. This idea is a force which has been moulding itself in the course of centuries, especially the last two centuries, which were so dreadful to the people, but which we so ardently eulogize for European enlightenment, forgetting the fact that this enlightenment was bought two centuries ago at the expense of serfdom and a Calvary of the Russian people serving us. The people waited for their liberator, and he came. Why, then, shouldn't they be his own, true children? The Tsar to the people is not an extrinsic force such as that of some conqueror (as were, for instance, the dynasties of the former Kings of France), but a national, all-unifying force, which the people themselves desired, which they nurtured in their hearts, which they came to love, for which they suffered because from it alone they hoped for their exodus from Egypt. To the people, the Tsar is the incarnation of themselves, their whole ideology, their hopes and beliefs.

"So recently these hopes have been completely realized. Would the people renounce their further hopes? Wouldn't the latter, on the contrary, be

strengthened and reinforced, since after the peasants' reform the Tsar became the people's father not merely in hope but in reality. This attitude of the people toward the Tsar is the genuine, adamant foundation of every reform in Russia. If you wish, there is in Russia no creative, protective and leading force other than this live organic bond of the people with their Tsar, from which everything is derived. For instance, who would have ventured to dream about the peasants' reform without knowing and believing in advance that the Tsar was a father to the people, and that precisely this faith of the people in the Tsar as their father would save and protect everything and stave off the calamity?"

Let us look at the balance-sheet of the reform from a purely material point of view. Emancipation would pave the way for more efficient agriculture and the provision of labour for the industrialization of Russia, so sorely needed in view of the relative failure of the Crimean War, by freeing the peasants from the commune as soon as they had paid their redemption payments. These would then be free to seek work in the towns and factories.

Again, as Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, "the existence of serfdom obstructed modernization of the army and thereby burdened the treasury with huge and unproductive military expenditure. As the military reformer R.A. Fadeyev pointed [out], 'Under serfdom, anyone becoming a soldier is freed; hence one cannot, without shaking the whole social order, admit many people to military service. Therefore we have to maintain on the army establishment in peacetime all the soldiers we need in war.'"

Philip Bobbitt confirms this judgement: "Because service in the army was rewarded by emancipation, serfs had to be recruited for long periods; otherwise, the number of those bound to the land would have plummeted. Thus recruitment provided only about 700,000 men. There was no reserve. Such measures did not fill the needs of contemporary warfare, which required universal, short-term conscription, followed by service in the reserve. An adequate system, however, would move all serfs through the army in a generation. Therefore modern conscription and reserve service meant the emancipation of the serfs. And this is precisely what happened. In 1861 the serfs were freed; universal military service followed in 1874. Six years' active service and a nine-year reserve created a total force of 1.35 million."

Indeed, so important does Bobbitt consider Russia's defeat in the Crimean war, and the emancipation of the serfs and the introduction of universal conscription which that defeat entailed, that he described it as "completing her constitutional transition to a state-nation", a transition which all the other major powers in Europe had already made in response to the emergence of

the first state-nation, Napoleonic France.

But there were still more advantages to the emancipation of the serfs. Thus it would save the poorer nobles from bankruptcy. For "by 1859, one-third of the estates and two-thirds of the serfs owned by the landed nobles had been mortgaged to the state and noble banks. Many of the smaller landowners could barely afford to feed their serfs. The economic argument for emancipation was becoming irrefutable, and many landowners were shifting willy-nilly to the free labour system by contracting other people's serfs. Since the peasantry's redemption payments would cancel out the gentry's debts, the economic rationale was becoming equally irresistible."

Inevitably, however, many were disappointed. Many of the peasants had not expected to pay for the land, and found the payments greater than the rents they had been paying earlier. Moreover, once liberated, they lost access to timber and firewood in landowners' forests.

Again, "the Law allowed landowners considerable leeway in choosing the bits of land for transfer to the peasantry - and in setting the price for them. Overall, perhaps half the farming land in European Russia was transferred from the gentry's ownership to the communal tenure of the peasantry, although the precise proportion depended largely on the landowner's will. Owing to the growth of the population it was still far from enough to liberate the peasantry from poverty."

Again, for those peasants who did not take advantage of their freedom to leave the land, and until they had paid their redemption payments, the authority of the commune over them would actually *increase* now that the authority of the landlord was removed. If one member of the commune could not contribute payments or labour, he fell into debt, as it were, to the commune.

Moreover, "during the conservative reign of Alexander III legislation was passed which made it virtually impossible for peasants to withdraw. This policy was inspired by the belief that the commune was a stabilizing force which strengthened the authority of the *bol'shak* [head of the individual peasant household], curbed peasant anarchism, and inhibited the formation of a volatile landless proletariat."

So while the government genuinely wanted to free the peasant, both as a good deed in itself, and in order to exploit his economic potential, its desire to strengthen the bonds of the commune tended to work in the opposite direction...

The radicals said that the reform provided "inadequate freedom". However, the real problem was not so much "inadequate freedom" as the fact that emancipation introduced "the wrong kind of freedom". The very composer of the manifesto, Metropolitan Philaret, had doubts about emancipation. True freedom, according to the Metropolitan, "is Christian freedom - internal, not external freedom, - moral and spiritual, not carnal, - always doing good and never rebellious, which can live in a hut just as comfortably as in an aristocrat's or tsar's house, - which a subject can enjoy as much as the master without ceasing to be a subject, - which is unshakeable in bonds and prison, as we can see in the Christian martyrs'." This freedom was not lost under serfdom. Rather, it was emancipation that threatened this true Christian freedom by introducing the demand for another, non-Christian kind.

In fact, as we have seen, the old order, though harsh, was never really one of traditional slavery. It had been dictated by the military situation of the time, in which Russia had vast extended borders with no natural defences. A quasi-monastic way of life was developed in which everyone from the Tsar to the humblest peasant had his "obedience". The Tsar had to obey his calling; the nobles had to obey the Tsar (by providing military service or service in the bureaucracy); and the peasants had to obey the landowners. It was a common effort for a common cause - the preservation of Orthodox Russia. Nobody literally "owned" anybody else. But there were relations of obedience enforced by law that were carried out, for the most part, in the Spirit of Orthodoxy. For, as St. John of Kronstadt said, "the varied forms of service... to the tsar and the fatherland are an image of the main service to our heavenly King, which must continue forever. Him first of all are we are obliged to serve, as fervent slaves of His by creation, redemption and providence... Earthly service is a test, a preparatory service for service in the heavens".

As we have seen, the sanctifying bonds of obedience were already breaking down before the reform as the numbers of peasant riots increased. But the change in formal structure from patriarchal to civil after 1861 meant that these bonds broke down still faster than they would have done otherwise. To that extent, the reform, though rational from a politico-economic point of view, was harmful. As Schema-Monk Boris of Optina said: "The old order was better, even though I would really catch it from the nobleman... Now it's gotten bad, because there's no authority; anyone can live however he wants."

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: "Later critics of the reform also justly point out that it suffered from an excessive 'slant' in one direction, being inspired most of all by the idea of the immediate emancipation of the serfs from *the*

landowners, but without paying due attention to the question how and with what to substitute the guiding, restraining and, finally, educating function of 'the lords' (the landowners) for the peasants. Indeed, delivered as it were in one moment to themselves, to their own self-administration (after 100 years of the *habit* of being guided by the lord), could the Russian peasants immediately undertake their self-administration wisely and truly, to their own good and that of the Fatherland? That is the question nobody wanted to think about at the beginning, being sometimes ruled by the *illusion* of the 'innateness' of the people's wisdom!... They began to think about this, as often happens with us, 'in hindsight', after they had encountered disturbances and ferment among the peasantry. All the indicated mistakes in the reform of 1861 led to the peasantry as a whole being *dissatisfied* in various respects. Rumours spread among them that 'the lords' had again deceived them, that the Tsar had given them *not that* kind of freedom, that the real 'will of the Tsar' had been hidden from them, while a false one had been imposed upon them. This was immediately used by the 'enlighteners' and revolutionaries of all kinds. The peasants gradually began to listen not to the state official and the former lord, but to *the student*, who promised 'real' freedom and abundant land, attracting the peasant with the idea of 'the axe', by which they themselves would win all this from the deceiver-lords... In such a situation *only the Church* remained in her capacity of educator and instructor of the people, which task she immediately began to fulfill, although it was very difficult because of the restricted and poor condition of the Church herself. Therefore there soon arose the question of the broadening and strengthening of the rights and opportunities of the Russian Church. The most powerful and influential person who completely understood this was Pobedonostsev, who did a great deal in this respect, thereby eliciting the hatred of all 'democrats'.

"But in spite of inadequacies and major mistakes, the reform of 1861, of course, exploded and transfigured the life of Great Russia. A huge mass of the population (about 22 million people) found themselves a free and self-governing estate (class), juridically *equal* to the other estates. This immediately elicited the need to build its life and activity on *new* foundations..."

This judgement is echoed by J.M. Roberts: "In retrospect [the emancipation of the serfs] seems a massive achievement. A few years later the United States would emancipate its Negro slaves. There were far fewer of them than there were Russian peasants and they lived in a country of much greater economic opportunity, yet the effect of throwing them on the labour market, exposed to the pure theory of *laissez-faire* economic liberalism, was to exacerbate a problem with whose ultimate consequences the United State is still grappling. In Russia the largest measure of social engineering in recorded history down to this time was carried out without comparable dislocation and it opened the

way to modernization for what was potentially one of the strongest powers on earth…"

11. METROPOLITAN PHILARET AND CHURCH REFORM

We have noticed the important role played by Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow in the emancipation manifesto. It is not surprising, therefore, that his advice should have been solicited in other reforms, too, including, of course, Church reform. And yet, as Gregory Frazee writes, "from the very onset of the Great Reforms, Philaret expressed deep reservations about ambitious plans for a radical reconstruction of Russian state and society. In a sermon delivered at Chudovo Monastery in 1856 (and ostensibly directed at more radical perspectives, but implicitly applicable to those with excessive ambitions for reform), Philaret upbraided those who 'work on the creation and establishment of better principles (in their opinion) for the formation and transformation of human cities. For more than half a century, the most educated part of mankind, in places and times, see their transformation efforts in action, but as yet, never and nowhere, have they created a "calm and tranquil life". They know how to disturb the ancient buildings of states, but not how to create something solid. According to their blueprints, new governments are suddenly built – and just as quickly collapse. They feel burdened by the paternal, reasonable authority of the tsar; they introduce the blind and harsh authority of the popular crowd and endless fights among those seeking power. They seduce people by assuring that they will lead them to freedom, but in reality they lead them away from lawful liberty to wilfulness, and then subject them to oppression.'

"Philaret was still more candid in his private correspondence. The same year, 1856, after receiving a far-reaching proposal to restore the Church's prerogatives, Philaret warned that 'it is easy to discern what should be improved, but not so easy to show the means to attain that improvement.' His experience over the next few years only intensified his abiding scepticism. In February 1862, he wrote a close confidante that 'now is not the time to seek new inventions for Church authority. May God help us to preserve that which has not been plundered or destroyed'."

Appeals were even made, writes Fr. Alexis Nikolin, "for the summoning of a Local Council of the Russian Church. However, conditions for that had not yet ripened. The Russian Church, in the opinion of the holy hierarch Philaret (Drozdov), was not yet ready for it at that time. His words are well-known: 'The misfortune of our time is that the quantity of sins and carelessnesses that have piled up in the course of more than one century almost exceed the strength and means of correction.' The holy hierarch Philaret considered that a change in the situation could take place as a result of a Church initiative, but not from State supervision…"

Why should Philaret, the churchman *par excellence*, turn down the

opportunity to increase the Church's independence in relation to the State? Partly because "the Great Reforms… entailed a relaxation of the oppressive censorship of the Nikolaevan era, primarily to stimulate public involvement in the reform process and to complement and correct the activities of officialdom. But *glasnost'* – as it was then termed – also entailed an unprecedented discussion of the Church and its problems. Philaret, understandably, found this critical comment in the press deeply disturbing, partly because it revealed the transparent animus of the educated and privileged toward the Church, but also because the government – ostensibly duty bound to defend the Church – allowed such publications to circulate. Even a conservative newspaper like *Moskovskie Vedomosti* elicited sharp complaints from Philaret, but far worse was to appear in the moderate and liberal press. The flow of antireligious publications made Philaret increasingly suspicious: 'Is there not a conspiracy striving to bring everything honourable into contempt and to undermine the convictions of faith and morality so that it will be easier to turn everything into democratic chaos?'"

Philaret's archconservatism was especially manifested in his reaction to the proposals for Church reform put forward by the minister of the interior, P.A. Valuev.

"In the summer of 1861,… Valuev wrote the emperor that he would like to prepare a memorandum on the matter, but because this sphere lay outside his jurisdiction, first asked permission to undertake the task. The issue had long been of concern to Valuev; while still a provincial governor, he had criticized the Church for its weaknesses and its tendency to resort to state coercion to shield believers from other confessions. Permission granted, Valuev then prepared a comprehensive memorandum that essentially became the blueprint for ecclesiastical reform in the 1860s.

"Entitled 'On the Present Condition of the Orthodox Church and Orthodox Clergy', his report argued that earlier proposals for Church reform in the Western provinces were doomed to failure, for the fundamental problems were structural, not regional. In Valuev's opinion, the Orthodox Church had fallen into such an abject condition that it could not combat apostasy without relying on the coercive apparatus of the state – a practice that was ineffective for the Church and troublesome for the state officials charged with prosecuting religious dissenters. Like many in the government, Valuev wanted the Church to provide support for the state, but now found the relationship one-sided: although the Church relies upon state power, 'the government cannot enjoy reciprocal assistance from ecclesiastical authorities, because their influence is too insignificant.' In Valuev's opinion, not only the Church as an institution, but its servitors (above all, the rank-and-file parish clergy) were in dire straits: 'One cannot help feeling profound sorrow when

seeing the conditions which the Orthodox clergy, the closest representatives and the pastors of the Church, occupy among other classes of the population. Everywhere one notices a lack of feeling of respect and trust toward [the clergy], and a feeling of profound, bitter denigration is apparent among them.' Much of the problem, he contended, derived from the deep animus between the black and white clergy. In Valuev's view, all this resulted from the social isolation of the bishops: 'The diocesan bishops for the most part lead the life of involuntary recluses, avoiding the secular world around them, neither understanding nor knowing its needs.' Valuev further asserted that the bishops 'are primarily concerned not with the flock entrusted to them, but with the lower pastors subordinated to them,' and that they reign over the latter 'like the most brutal despots'. He stressed that this despotism is all the more onerous, since it unleashes 'the avarice of the diocesan chancelleries and consistories', who subject the parish clergy to merciless abuse: 'The priests are obliged to pay them tribute. If the tribute is deemed insufficient, they are punished by endless, ruinous relocations from one parish to another. Not a single priest is secure against such relations by the most zealous performance of his duties, the most impeccable life.' While not denying that the bishops were 'in general worthy of every respect in terms of their personal qualities,' Valuev complained that the prelates often fell under the sway of their chancelleries. The result is 'a certain hardening of feelings' and inaccessibility compounded by 'advanced age and illness', which left them unfit for 'intensified independent work'. These problems, warned Valuev, caused parish clergy not only to despise their superiors but to exhibit an attraction to radical, even Protestant ideas: 'The white clergy hates the black clergy, and with the assistance of this hatred there is already beginning to spread not only democratic, but even socialist strivings, but also a certain inclination toward Protestantism, which with time could lead to a convulsion within the bosom of the Church. The white clergy is poor, helpless, and lacking with respect to its own means of existence and the fate of their families. For the most part it stands at a low level of education and lives under conditions that efface the traces of that inadequate education which they acquired in the ecclesiastical seminaries and academies; it does not constitute and organized *soslovie* (estate) in the state, but a caste of Levites; it sees no hope for an improvement in its material existence, because it understands that, given its very large numbers, it cannot count on significant generosity on the part of the government. That explains why part of the parish priests live at the expense of the schism, which they pander to, and the other resorts to extortion from parishioners, or languishes in need that often extinguishes its mental and moral powers.

"Not surprisingly, he concluded, the Church had proven incapable of combating the steady inroads by the schism, sects, and other confessions.

"To address these problems, Valuev proposed systematic, fundamental reform. One was to dismantle the hereditary clerical estate (*dukhovnoe soslovie*), at a minimum by permitting the clergy's sons – who normally remained within the hereditary clerical estate – to choose their own career path, but perhaps by excluding them from inclusion in the estate altogether. Valuev also urged a 'radical transformation' of the seminary curriculum in order to provide an education that would facilitate mobility into secular careers. No less important was the problem of material support for the clergy: a combination of gratuities (a source of humiliation and endless conflict) and agriculture (a distraction from the clergy's spiritual duties). Since the state was in position to provide salaries, Valuev could only suggest a traditional remedy (set reasonable fees to preclude haggling over rites), surplus state land (where available), and the merger of parishes (to form larger, more economically viable units). More attractive to the clergy, no doubt, was Valuev's proposal 'to give the parish clergy an honorable, active, and independent participation in public education', a measure that would simultaneously provide them with additional income and help draw them 'closer to the other educated classes'. No less important, in Valuev's view, was the need to involve the bishops in worldly matters: 'This improvement [in relations between prelates and priests], in turn, is hardly possible so long as the prelates of our church will remain alien to all everyday relations, all the civil needs of their flock. It is desirable to draw them [the bishops] closer to the latter; for this rapprochement, it is almost necessary to give them the opportunity, even if in some cases, to participate in the civil affairs of their fatherland, to show them the path along which they can acquire the right to this participation. The summoning of several members of the Holy Synod to the State Council, with the right to participate in discussions of all the matters brought before it (except criminal cases), would open this opportunity and indicate this path to the upper members of our clergy.'

"Fully aware of the sensitive nature of these proposals, Valuev proposed that he first hold private discussions with the venerable metropolitan of Moscow, Philaret, and seek to gain his approval – a critical step in securing the Church's approval and cooperation… His principal concern was to secure Philaret's support for a joint Church-state committee, an intrusion into the ecclesiastical domain likely to raise the hackles of this determined tserkovnik. In part, Valuev hoped that the emperor's special solicitude toward Philaret would carry the day; he later reported to Alexander that 'the attention and trust shown by Your Majesty to the opinion of His Grace Philaret was obviously pleasant and flattering for him.'

"Valuev did in fact win Philaret's general assent, but met with resistance on several issues. First, although Valuev tactfully avoided 'using the phrases "closed estate" (zamknutoe soslovie) and "break up the estate" (razomknut'

soslovie), Philaret understood perfectly what the minister had in mind. He denied that the clergy constituted a caste and cited his own vicar – born into the nobility – to demonstrate the point. Second, Philaret showed little enthusiasm for allotting the clergy additional land, but appeared to withdraw his objection in view of the state's inability to provide salaries. Third, Philaret categorically opposed permitting a joint Church-state committee to reform ecclesiastical schools, a matter falling exclusively within the Church's competence. Finally, Philaret rejected the idea of including Synod members in the State Council. He feared that the latter might treat the prelates with condescension and attempt to raise issues about Church finances (an allusion to the issue of the Church budget, an issue still unresolved at this point). In cases where the State Council needed the Synod's view, declared Philaret, it could simply invite them to special sessions – as had been done in the past…

"Although the government did not further consult Philaret, it did pare back the original vision. Thus Valuev jettisoned his scheme for Synodal membership in the State Council, but still tried to give the new committee a broad range of authority, even over spheres that Philaret had explicitly precluded. Thus, a Valuev draft proposal of January 1862 still gave the committee the power to deal not only with the 'clerical question', but also with the reform of ecclesiastical schools. More important still, Valuev wanted the committee determine 'the degree and means for the participation of parishioners in the economic governance of the affairs of the parish church'. That was a highly sensitive issue, given the laity's strong aversion to the diversion of local resources to finance general Church needs. In the teeth of clerical opposition, however, Valuev eventually trimmed back the original charge to the matters condoned by Metropolitan Philaret.

"Thus, while Philaret acceded to the inclusion of several ranking state officials in the mixed commission (eventually re-titled 'Special Commission on the Needs of the Clergy', he had greatly reduced the broad mandate that Valuev originally sought. He defended the Church's authority (in the issue of ecclesiastical schools) and defeated the scheme to include Synodal members in the State Council. While Philaret could hardly deny the need for reform, he was adamant about preserving the Church's institutional integrity and privileges."

In the last years of Philaret's life, his influence waned and the secular principles he feared began increasingly to penetrate Church life. Thus "from 1865," writes Nikolin, "the over-procurator of the Holy Synod became Count Demetrius A. Tolstoy, who combined this post with the post of minister of popular enlightenment, as if renewing the experiment of the 'double ministry' of Prince Golitsyn. However, in contrast to the supra-confessional mysticism of the latter, Count Tolstoy demonstrated an idiosyncratic supra-confessional

indifferentism. A man of conservative views and well-versed in matters of common and internal politics, Count Tolstoy showed himself to be a radical and an innovator in ecclesiastical matters, but an innovator who was far from an understanding of Church life. He worked out a series of liberal reforms in various spheres of the ecclesiastical order. Thus, immediately after the publication of the *Juridical Statutes*, the over-procurator raised the question of the suitability of reforming the Church courts on the same principles on which the civil courts had been reformed. This and other projects of Count Tolstoy suggested the reconstruction of Church life in accordance with the rules of secular consciousness, and not on the basis of the canonical self-consciousness of the Church."

Again, "despite earlier promises of including the parish clergy into the new system of elementary public education, the central government ultimately abdicated a primary role and left the responsibility with the community, zemstvo, or Ministry of Education – not the Church. As Philaret acidly complained to a close confidante: 'But then came the new minister of education. And they say that it is already decided that rural schools will be secular, and that millions of rubles have been allotted for them. A single act of grace was given to us: the priests are not forbidden to keep their schools, without any assistance for them.' As a result, the parish schools that clergy had so fervently opened in the 1850s came upon hard times, their number sharply dropping, until the government renewed its support – and financing – in the 1880s."

After the death of Philaret, measures were introduced to break down the closed character of the clerical estate, as Valuev had proposed. "During the reign of Alexander II decrees were issued in 1867 and 1868 by which the inheritance of Church posts was removed. And in 1869 a decree established new regulations for parish churches. Finally, on May 26, 1869 a decree destroyed the isolation of the clergy. By this decree all children of the clerical estate were classified in secular callings. Moreover, the children of clergy were put on the same level as the children of nobility, and the children of church servers on the same level as honoured citizens, while the children of the lower clergy were ascribed to town or village society while retaining their previous exemption from taxes and military service.

"Help to the monasteries after the emancipation of the peasants consisted of giving them each year 168,200 rubles for the payment of hired labourers. By 1890 this sum had grown to 425,000 rubles.

"During the reign of Alexander II the State power often returned to the questions relating to the schism [of the Old Ritualists]… On ascending the throne Emperor Alexander II liquidated the secret department [on the affairs

of the Old Ritualists]. The remaining directives [of Nicholas I] remained in force, but their application was softened. The marriages of schismatics were allowed. However, these had to be registered in special metrical books."

The objections of Metropolitan Philaret to Church reform, like those of Pobedonostsev somewhat later, were not to be scorned. But the main problem lay elsewhere, in the Church's inability to order her internal life in accordance with her own laws. And this truly weakened her in a way that was to prove to be disastrous in the long term; for only a Church able to act in the spirit of the Holy Gospel and in accordance with the Sacred Canons without succumbing to the often harmful interference of the State could hope to halt the processes of apostasy that were now deeply ingrained in society.

As St. Ignaty Brianchaninov wrote: "We are helpless to arrest this apostasy. Impotent hands will have no power against it and nothing more will be required than the attempt to withhold it. The spirit of the age will reveal the apostasy. Study it, if you wish to avoid it, if you wish to escape this age and the temptation of its spirits. One can suppose, too, that the institution of the Church which has been tottering for so long will fall terribly and suddenly. Indeed, no-one is able to stop or prevent it. *The present means to sustain the institutional Church are borrowed from the elements of the world, things inimical to the Church, and the consequence will be only to accelerate its fall.* Nevertheless, the Lord protects the elect and their limited number will be filled."

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Metropolitan Philaret's death was as Grace-filled as his life had been. Two months before, writes Helena Kontzevich, "his long-dead father appeared to him and said, 'Beware the 19th', and he began to prepare for his death. On November 19, 1867 he served Divine Liturgy with exceptional feeling and tears. At two in the afternoon he was found dead in his cell. His righteous death, as also his life, was concealed from me.

"Literally the whole of Moscow participated in the burial of the great hierarch, hundreds of thousands of people accompanying him to his final resting place in the Holy Trinity Lavra of St. Sergy."

12. RUSSIA'S IMPERIAL EXPANSION

In spite of her defeat in the Crimean War, Russia continued to extend her influence into Asia. Her church missions to Siberia and Central Asia, China, Japan and Alaska were to bring forth rich fruit; later Persia would feel her beneficial influence. Several missionaries attained holiness on these foreign mission fields in this period. Thus we could mention St. Innocent of Alaska, St. Macarius of the Altai and Archbishop Gurias of Tauris, who worked in the Peking Spiritual Mission. And Russia fulfilled her mission as the Third Rome in her protection of the ancient Orthodox kingdom of Georgia.

Georgia depended for her very survival on the support of Russia against the Muslim peoples to the south. Correspondingly, Russia's constant aim in the Caucasus region was to establish a firm and reliable bridge to Georgia across the Caucasus mountains. To this end, as Archpriest Lev Lebedev writes, "it was necessary to overcome the opposition of Persia and Turkey and the warlike mountain peoples of the Northern Caucasus and the Caspian and Black Sea coasts whom they often stirred up.

"It is fashionable to talk about the cruelties committed by the Russian armies in this 'Caucasian war'. But it is not fashionable to talk about the bestial acts of the Muslim mountaineers in relation to the Russians, and also in relation to those of their own people who had accepted Orthodoxy (for example, the Osetians and Georgians). And these acts exceeded all human imagination. War is war! The mutual hardening of the sides was, alas, inevitable here. And so there were also excesses of violence and cruelty on the side of the Russians… Gradually, at a dear price, Russia managed to break the opposition of the mountaineers and thereby guarantee a constant safe 'bridge' of communication with Orthodox Georgia."

Russia first made contact with the Caucasian mountaineers when she achieved her great victory over the Tatar Mohammedans at the taking of Kazan. In 1552 two Cherkessian princes asked Ivan IV, the conqueror of Kazan, to receive them as subjects to help them in their struggle against the Turkish sultan and his vassal, the Crimean Khan. In 1557 two Kabardinian princes, Temryuk and Tizryut, asked for the same in their struggle against Shamkhal of Tarki.

Soon there were Cossacks on the banks of Terek, and in 1586 the Russian Tsar and King Alexander of Georgia formed an alliance against Shamkhal, as a result of which Tarki was stormed in 1594. But Sultan-Muta, son of Shamkhal, and the whole of Dagestan rebelled against the Russians. Tarki was destroyed in 1604 and the Russian armies were destroyed. It was not

until over a century later, in 1722, that Peter I resumed the Russian advance and conquered the Caspian coast. This brought the Russians into conflict with the Shah of Persia, who in 1741 tried to conquer the area, but was defeated.

"To some extent," writes Dominic Lieven, "the Russians were pulled into the Trans-Caucasus - in other words, across the mountains - by appeals for support from the Georgians, a fellow Orthodox people. Georgia was too weak to defend itself against increasing pressure from both the Ottomans and the Persians. Georgia had good reason to seek the protection of empire and to escape the anarchy, economic devastation and loss of population that had resulted from existing in an insecure borderland. In the mid-thirteenth century there were five million Georgians, by 1770 there were barely 500,000. In the last decades of the eighteenth century Petersburg wavered as to whether it was worthwhile to take on the burden of defending and ruling Georgia. In the end what mattered most were strategic and geopolitical considerations. Given both traditional hostility to the Ottoman Empire and growing rivalry with Napoleonic France and Britain in Persia and the Ottoman Empire, it was decided to annex Georgia as Russia's base and centre of power beyond the Caucasus. Once established in the region, however, the Russians to some extent had to obey the laws of local geopolitics. This entailed, for example, conquering the land and sea communications between the Trans-Caucasus and Russia. Subduing the mountain peoples of the North Caucasus proved a hugely expensive and time-consuming struggle, not concluded until the 1860s."

In 1785-87 Sheikh Mansur led Chechnia and Dagestan in rebellion against the Russians. He was defeated. However, in 1812 rebellion flared up again.

Then, "in 1826," writes Lebedev, "for the sake of her interests in Georgia and without a declaration of war, Persia invaded the Transcaucasus. General Ermolov, the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies in the Caucasus, was not able with his forces to deal with the invasion. There came to his help the armies led by General Paskevich. In a series of battles Paskevich defeated the Persians, took Erivan (Yerevan), invaded Persia and headed for its capital - Teheran. The Persian Shah sought peace, which was concluded in 1828 in Turkmanchai, in accordance with which the lands of present-day Armenia and Azerbaidjan passed permanently to Russia. An end was placed to Persia's pretensions. Nicholas I bestowed the title of Count of Erivan on Paskevich. It was more difficult to bring into submission the mountain tribes of the Northern Caucasus, with whom the Russian Cossack settlements on the Terek and Kuban had long had dealings. The Chechens, the Cherkessy and other warlike peoples not only warred against the Cossacks, they also lived next to them and entered into peaceful relations with the Russians, encountering in these cases a completely friendly response from the Russians. But in 1825

there began the 'Miurizm' movement, which was introduced from Turkey. The 'Miuridy' (novices) were obliged to wage a holy war against the 'infidel' Russians under the leadership of 'holy elders' - imams and sheiks - with the aim of creating an extensive 'caliphate' from Stambul to the Kuban. The imams Kazi-mullah and later Shamil became popular leaders."

From the middle of the 1840s Shamil became both the political and the religious leader of the state of Imamat, "the ruler of the right-believing"; all executive, judicial and legislative power was in his hands. Declaring all the tribal leaders who submitted to the Russians to be traitors and apostates, he united all the North Caucasus mountaineers for the first time. As the French consul in Tiflis wrote: "We have to distinguish two personalities united in Shamil.... On the one hand, the political leader, dictator, to whom limitless power was presented by events with a democratic system based on the principle of absolute equality. But at the same time he is a religious leader, to whom the calling of the great imam, the supreme head of the right believers, a sacred character is attached. Having this dual calling, he is the only judge in the question of offering the sacrifices demanded by the war. His power is firmly organized."

However, God was with the Russian armies. Thus on December 24, 1853 Archbishop Isidore, the exarch of Georgia, wrote to Metropolitan Philaret of Moscow: "The captured Turks told us openly that when the battle near Alexandropol' became fierce, and the whole Russian detachment became involved, the Turks saw a radiant woman coming down from heaven holding a banner in her hands and accompanied by two warriors. The light from her was so bright that it was like the shining of the sun, and no eye could stand it. This appearance produced horror in the ranks of the fighters and was the reason why, on seeing that God was on the side of Rus', all the Turks turned to flight and lost the battle. The Russians did not see this appearance. By the Providence of God our foreign enemies witnessed to it."

In 1859 Shamil was captured, and by 1864 the Caucasian wars had come to an end, having claimed the lives of nearly 100,000 Russians killed since 1801. At this point, writes Lieven, most of the population of the western region of the Caucasus "were 'encouraged' to emigrate to the Ottoman Empire amidst great suffering and loss of life. The Chechens and Dagestanis of the eastern region, who had resisted the Russians with equal determination, were allowed to remain in their homeland. The reason for this was that the western region, bordering on a Black Sea on which Russia [after the Crimean War] was not permitted to have a navy, was acutely vulnerable to Ottoman or British attack. In the aftermath of the Crimean War, St. Petersburg's perception was that Russia was dangerously weak, and Palmerston's England on the offensive worldwide. Palmerston himself commented that 'these half-

civilized governments such as those of China, Portugal, Spanish America require a Dressing every eight or ten years to keep them in order', and no one who knew his views on Russia could doubt his sense that she too deserved to belong to this category of states. The Russians were not therefore prepared to leave on this coastline a Sunni population whom they quite rightly believed to be potential allies of the Ottomans in any future war. A British historian of the 'Great Game' (i.e. Anglo-Russian nineteenth-century rivalry in Central Asia) comments that 'the forcible exile of six hundred thousand Circassians from the Black Sea Coast deprived the Turks and the British of their most valuable potential allies within the Russian Empire.'"

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Unlike the Caucasus, Central Asia and the Far East did not represent areas of vital geopolitical importance to Russia or Georgia; and therefore Russian conquests there must be evaluated in a different way.

In 1859, following the victory of Britain over China in the Second Opium War, and as a joint Anglo-French force was approaching Peking to enforce the terms that had been agreed, Count Nicholas Ignatiev managed to secure the weakened Emperor's formal ceding of Manchuria to Russia. Then, when the foreign troops had left Peking after securing the agreement they wanted, Ignatiev signed the Treaty of Peking with the Chinese. Peter Hopkirk writes: "It had been a Machiavellian performance of the highest order by the young Ignatiev, then still in his late twenties, and a remarkable diplomatic triumph for the Russians. First, they had formally added a vast tract of territory, the size of France and Germany together, to their already huge northern Asiatic empire. Second, they had got the Chinese to agree to their opening consulates at Kashgar, in Eastern Turkestan, and at Urga, the capital of Mongolia, then both under Peking's rule. They had thereby stolen a march on their rivals, the British, who had obtained no such facility, for the establishment of consulates meant that Russian merchants and goods would have exclusive access to these important new markets. It was with considerable satisfaction, therefore, that Ignatiev left Peking on November 22 and rode hard for St. Petersburg. 'Not since 1815,' one British historian has written, 'had Russia concluded such an advantageous treaty, and probably never before had such a feat been carried off by so young a Russian diplomat. The successes of 1860 went far to obliterate the bitter memories of the Crimean defeat, the more especially as they had been achieved in good measure by hoodwinking the English.'"

Machiavellianism? Hoodwinking? From the Russian Tsars? Such an idea would have been considered outrageously unjust in relation to Alexander I or Nicolas I, both of whom conducted their foreign policy on the basis of high

principle: Alexander (from 1815, at any rate) - on the basis of the Sacred Union of Christian powers against the revolution, and Nicholas on the basis of the interests of the Orthodox Christian commonwealth as a whole. But in the new reign a group of senior army officers and diplomats, determined to take revenge for their country's defeat in the Crimean War, took advantage of the inexperience of the young tsar to push through a foreign policy that was often Machiavellian, sometimes outrightly deceitful and imperialist in the western sense - that is, designed, not for any higher spiritual purpose, such as the spreading of the Orthodox Christian Faith among the pagans, but simply in order to increase the political and economic power of Russia and steal a march on the scheming British.

This was particularly clear in Central Asia, where from 1864 the Russians gradually acquired huge territories by a series of sudden coups and advances, each time declaring that they had no intention of acquiring more territory. The first such disavowal came in December, 1864, when just after the Russians had seized the oasis towns of Chimkent and Turkestan from the Khan of Khokand, the Russian Foreign Minister Prince Gorchakov issued a memorandum to the European Powers. "'The position of Russia in Central Asia,' declared this celebrated document, 'is that of all civilised States which are brought into contact with half-savage nomad populations possessing no fixed social organisation. In such cases it always happens that the more civilised State is forced, in the interests of the security of its frontiers and its commercial relations, to exercise a certain ascendancy over those whose turbulent and unsettled character make them undesirable neighbours.' In their turn these newly pacified regions had to be protected from the depredations of the lawless tribes beyond them, and so on. The Russian government therefore had to choose between bringing civilisation to those suffering under barbarian rule and abandoning its frontiers to anarchy and bloodshed. 'Such has been the fate,' Gorchakov wrote, 'of every country which has found itself in a similar position.' Britain and the other colonial powers had been 'irresistibly forced, less by ambition than by imperious necessity, into this onward march'. The greatest difficulty, he concluded, lay in deciding where to stop. Nonetheless, having consolidated its frontier with Khokand, Russia was intending to advance no further.

"'We find ourselves,' he assured the other powers, 'in the presence of a more solid, less unsettled and better organised State, fixing for us with geographical precision that point at which we must halt.' Whether he himself really believed this, or whether he was merely playing for time on behalf of a government already bent on subjugating the khanates, is a question which still exercises scholars. Certainly N.A. Khalfin, the Soviet historian of this era, believes that it was a deliberate smokescreen aimed at deceiving the British. Needless to say, the Russian advance did not stop

there as Gorchakov had promised. Within a few months they were driving south once more. The great Russian push into Central Asia was about to begin…"

Essentially the Russians were playing the same "great game" of colonial conquest as the British. For that reason, the British could not protest too much, and preferred the policy of "masterful inactivity". And so by 1881, the Russians had consolidated their border along the northern frontier of Afghanistan, while that country stood as the neutral buffer State between Russian Central Asia and British India.

The reaction at home was mixed. "In 1874," writes Oliver Figes, "the Ministry of Internal Affairs in St. Petersburg hosted an extraordinary exhibition by the artist Vasily Vereshchagin, whose enormous battle scenes of the Turkestan campaign had recently returned with high acclaim from a European tour. Huge crowds came to see the exhibition (30,000 copies of the catalogue were sold in the first week) and the building of the Ministry became so cramped that several fights broke out as people jostled for a better view. Vereshchagin's pictures were the public's first real view of the Imperial war which the Russians had been fighting for the past ten years against the Muslim tribes as the Tsar's troops conquered Turkestan. The Russian public took great pride in the army's capture of the khanates of Kokand, Bukhara and Khiva, followed by its conquest of Tashkent and the arid steppe of Central Asia right up to the borders with Afghanistan and British India. After its defeat in the Crimean War, the campaign showed the world that Russia was a power to be reckoned with. But Vereshchagin's almost photographic battle images revealed a savagery which had not been seen by civilians before. It was not clear who was more 'savage' in his pictures of the war: the Russian troops or their Asiatic opponents. There was 'something fascinating, something truly horrifying, in the wild energy of these canvases', concluded one reviewer in the press. 'We see a violence that could not be French or even from the Balkans: it is half-barbarian and semi-Asiatic - it is a Russian violence.'

"It had not originally been the painter's aim to draw this parallel. Vereshchagin started out as an official war artist, and it was not part of his remit to criticize the conduct of the Russian military... But his experience of the war in Turkestan had given rise to doubts about the 'civilizing mission' of the Russian Empire in the East. On one occasion, after the Russian troops had massacred the people of a Turkmen village, Vereshchagin dug their graves himself. None of his compatriots would touch the dead. Vereshchagin came to see the war as a senseless massacre... The message of Vereshchagin's epic canvases was clearly understood. He portrayed the Asian tribesmen, not as savages, but as simply human beings who were driven to defend their native

land. 'What the public saw,' Stasov later wrote, 'was both sides of the war - the military conquest and the human suffering. His paintings were the first to sound a loud protest against the barbarians of the Imperial war.'

"There was a huge storm of controversy. Liberals praised the artists for his stance against all war. Conservatives denounced him as a 'traitor to Russia', and mounted a campaign to strip him of his Order of St. George. General Kaufman became so enraged when he saw the artist's pictures that he began to shout and swear at Vereshchagin and physically attacked him in the presence of his fellow officers. The General Staff condemned his paintings as a 'slander against the Imperial army', and called for them to be destroyed; but the Tsar, ironically, was on the liberals' side...

"In Russia's educated circles the military conquest of the Central Asian steppe produced two opposing reactions. The first was the sort of imperialist attitude which Vereshchagin's paintings had done so much to offend. It was based on a sense of racial superiority to the Asiatic tribes, and at the same time a fear of those same tribes, a fear of being swamped by the 'yellow peril' which reached fever pitch in the war against Japan. The second reaction was no less imperialist but it justified the empire's eastern mission on the questionable grounds that Russia's cultural homeland was on the Eurasian steppe. By marching into Asia, the Russians were returning to their ancient home. This rationale was first advanced in 1840 by the orientalist Grigoriev. 'Who is closer to Asia than we are?' Grigoriev had asked. 'Which of the European races retained more of the Asian element than the Slavic races did, the last of the great European peoples to leave their ancient homeland in Asia?' It was 'Providence that had called upon the Russians to reclaim the Asian steppe'; and because of 'our close relations with the Asiatic world', this was to be a peaceful process of 'reunion with our primeval brothers', rather than the subjugation of a foreign race. During the campaign in Central Asia the same thesis was advanced. The Slavs were returning to their 'prehistoric home', argued Colonel Veniukov, a geographer in Kaufman's army, for 'our ancestors had lived by the Indus and the Oxus before they were displaced by the Mongol hordes'. Veniukov maintained that Central Asia should be settled by the Russians. The Russian settlers should be encouraged to intermarry with the Muslim tribes to regenerate the 'Turanian' race that had once lived on the Eurasian steppe. In this way the empire would expand on the 'Russian principle' of 'peaceful evolution and assimilation' rather than by conquest and by racial segregation, as in the empires of the European states.

"The idea that Russia had a cultural and historic claim in Asia became a founding myth of the empire. During the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway in the 1890s, Prince Ukhtomsky, the press baron and adviser to the young Tsar Nicholas II, advocated the expansion of the empire across the

whole of the Asian continent, reasoning that Russia was a sort of 'older brother' to the Chinese and the Indians. 'We have always belonged to Asia,' Ukhtomsky told the Tsar. 'We have lived its life and felt its interests. We have nothing to conquer.'

"Inspired by the conquest of Central Asia, Dostoyevsky, too, advanced the notion that Russia's destiny was not in Europe, as had so long been supposed, but rather in the East. In 1881 he told the readers of his *Diary of a Writer*: 'Russia is not only in Europe but in Asia as well... We must cast aside our servile fear that Europe will call us Asiatic barbarians and say that we are more Asian than European... This mistaken view of ourselves as exclusively Europeans and not Asians (and we have never ceased to be the latter)... has cost us very dearly over these two centuries, and we have paid for it by the loss of our spiritual independence... It is hard for us to turn away from our window on Europe; but it is a matter of our destiny... When we turn to Asia, with our new view of her, something of the same sort may happen to us as happened to Europe when America was discovered. For, in truth, Asia for us is that same America which we still have not discovered. With our push towards Asia we will have a renewed upsurge of spirit and strength... In our Europe we were hangers-on and slaves, while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe we were Tatars, while in Asia we can be Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.'"

Russia certainly did have a civilizing mission in Asia: to bring Orthodoxy to its peoples. Unfortunately, this mission was sometimes forgotten in the ardour of nationalist or commercial passion. But in the wake of Russia's conquering armies, Orthodoxy did make gains - but more among the pagans than among the Muslims, and even more in Russian America beyond Asia – that is, Alaska - than in Asia proper.

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In Siberia, the Russian Church had been evangelizing the native tribes since the seventeenth century. In the nineteenth century great progress was made especially in the region of the High Altai. "The High Altai regions in the mid-19th century were still 'pagan' and we may describe their religion as 'Shamanism'. In the past there had been waves of various cultural influences: from the Chinese and hence of Buddhism and Taoism and also from the Turkic peoples to the south spread Islamic ideas and perhaps even Manichaeism and Nestorianism. Nevertheless these influences were weak and the main religion was Shamanism. The Russian Orthodox mission to the area was founded by Fr. Macarios in 1828. He settled in Biisk as permanent priest in residence in 1830. The missionaries, especially those who were

sympathetic to the Altai native people (which was mostly the case) made a fundamental contribution to the work of establishing a written Altai language which became a classic of its type. Later, following the model, the grammars of many other Turkic languages were to be defined. Archimandrite Macarios introduced a version of the Bible in the Altai language in the late 1830s. It is amazing to think that this work was begun in 1837 at Easter, not somewhere in highly educated Orthodox centres in the West but far on the frontiers in pagan Altai, in a small place called Ulala.

"Fr. Macarios was certainly an exceptional figure. He was a well-educated theologian who commanded several languages, including Greek and Hebrew. He translated the Bible into modern Russian. In his early years he studied the philosophy of the German philosopher Herder and was also familiar with the botanical work of Linneus and Denandel and the works of the astronomer Herschel and in general took a great interest in the natural science. For some time he was professor at the Theological Academy. From contemporary descriptions he seems to have been a man of great holiness who gave incorruptible service and love to the native peoples. In his approach to missionary work he advocated a definite program: it was not only to baptize the 'natives' and turn them into true children of the Heavenly Kingdom but also to lead them to a settled way of life, to literacy and to encourage them towards a more developed and more profitable form of agricultural practice. His program demanded of the missionaries a thorough knowledge of the Altai language, some basic ideas of science and medicine and an understanding of agrarian economics. He prepared for the mission practically useful objects such as seeds for market gardening and fruit growing, agricultural tools and so on. He produced the first translation into Altai of prayers and texts for church services. For the first time in the history of the missionary movement he took seriously the organization of missionary activities for women. He appointed female assistants. The first among these were the Russia Praskovia Landysheva and the Frenchwoman, Sofia Belmont. Among their duties were the education of the newly converted Altai women in the skills of childcare, sewing, bread making, elementary medical care and the fundamentals of midwifery. He even established an icon-painting studio where some gifted students learned about the fine arts to the extent that in time they established the Altai school of painting which spread over the whole region."

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Perhaps the most striking success of Russia as the Third Rome was on the American continent. Probably the first Russian Orthodox Christian in America was Colonel Philip Ludwell III, a third-generation Virginian and a relative of George Washington. But the first solid results for Orthodoxy took place far to the north in Russian Alaska, where the Russian Holy Synod send

a mission in 1794 containing the famous monk Herman, the first saint of the American continent.

“In 1741,” writes F.A. Golder, “Vitus Bering’s expedition to the Gulf of Alaska opened up the region to an army of Russian traders and trappers, lured there by the plentiful supply of seal and sea otter pelts. By the end of the eighteenth century, Alaska had become a Russian territory, with outposts stretching across the Aleutian Isles to Sitka. Many of the Russians lived on equal terms with the native peoples dwelling in their traditional sod houses and adopting the local customs. Some of the wealthier traders would even adopt young natives and send them back to Russia to be educated.

“This, unfortunately, was not the rule everywhere. The fierce competition for the lucrative fur trade led to the sometimes brutal exploitation of the Alaskan natives. Specifically on Kodiak Island, Gregory Shelikov’s and Ivan Golikov’s trading company was infamous for its abuse of the native people. The Kodiak men were enslaved in the hunting of sea otters, while the women were routinely abducted; hunger and physical abuse became common.

“Into this grim situation St. Herman and the nine other missionaries sailed in 1794. Despite the terrible conditions they endured – lack of food, insufficient clothing and shelter, and persecution by the Russian traders – the missionaries eagerly began their preaching of the Gospel. One would expect few of the natives to embrace the religion of a people they were resisting. Amazingly, the opposite occurred: almost every member of the Alutiiq tribe became Orthodox.”

By 1815 the mission already had its first saint - St. Peter the Aleut, who was martyred by Roman Catholics in San Francisco. The most famous member of this mission was the Valaam monk St. Herman of Alaska, who died in 1837 and was canonized in 1970. And there were other saints sent into this mission-field.

"From 1823," writes Lebedev, "there begins a second special Church mission, whose most prominent representative turned out to be the young priest Fr. John Popov-Veniaminov, later Metropolitan Innocent of Moscow and Kolomna. This great and wonderful man was born in 1797 in the village of a poor village reader near Irkutsk. He finished his studies at the Irkutsk seminary, where he displayed great interest both in theological and in secular sciences. In 1823, with the whole of his family, wife and children, he arrived at the island of Unalaska and began his apostolic ministry among the Aleuts, Kadyaks, Eskimos and Indians of the west coast of Alaska and Northern California (the city of Novo-Arkhangelsk on the island of Sitka). Teaching the local inhabitants various arts and household crafts, he with their help built a

church, introduced schools, work-houses and hospitals, and baptized *thousands* of natives without ever resorting to violence or any pressure, but acting only through love and the word of truth. Fr. John mastered six local languages, and studied and described the everyday life, manners and anthropology of the bribes, the local geography and climates, becoming a true father of the 'wild' peoples, or, as St. Herman of Alaska used to say about himself, their 'nanny'! For the Aleuts he composed an alphabet and translated the Gospel of Matthew and some necessary prayers and other books into their language. His works on the ethnography of the peoples of Alaska, California and the adjacent islands are still used in science to this day and are considered models. Even then, during his lifetime, they were highly valued by the academies of science of Russia and Europe! Father John Popov-Veniaminov continued the best traditions of the Russian missionaries of Siberia, the Altai and the Far East. In those times that was not simple, it demanded courage, asceticism. The point is that the interests of the apostolate of the Church in those places often contradicted the interests of the Russian-American Company (RAC), which traded in furs and sea animals. 'Industrial' people and RAC officials sometimes displayed cruelty, and sometimes were inclined mercilessly to exploit the natives, although one has to say that these were *excesses*, but not the rule! As a rule, even our 'industrials' behaved in a friendly and fraternal manner to the native population of America. Shelikhov considered marriages between Russian and Indians as very desirable. There were mixed marriages. The children from these marriages (Creoles) often turned out to be very capable people, while some of them attained high rank in state service in Russia. Catherine II and Paul I prescribed only friendly relations towards the natives under threat of punishment. A special decree of Emperor Alexander I ordered the RAC 'first of all to venerate humanity' in all the peoples of America, and in no case to resort to cruelty and violence. Russia often sent notes of protest to the USA, whose merchants sold firearms to the Indians. The USA replied that they were 'free', and that they could not ban this trade in death... But in the 19th century among our workers in RAC there were people who were completely foreign to Orthodox, who simply did not understand it (for example, the RAC's 'chronicler', Khlebnikov). And sometimes it was difficult for our missionaries to defined whom they had to enlighten first of all - the Aleuts and Indians, or our own people, the Russians!... In such circumstances only an all-encompassing (spiritual and secular) education of the apostles of America, like Fr. John Popov, could force some of the officials of RAC to venerate the Church and her missionary work. In 1840, on the recommendation of Metropolitan Philaret (Drozdov), who had become friends with Fr. John, Tsar Nicholas I appointed the priest Popov-Veniaminov, who had been widowed by this time and had accepted monasticism, as the first bishop of the newly formed Kamchatka, Kurile islands and Aleut diocese. When the Tsar gave this name to the diocese, people remarked to him: 'But Your Majesty! There is not a single church on

the Kurile islands!' 'Build them!' snapped the Emperor. That is how the new hierarch of the Russian Church Innocent (Veniaminov) appeared..."

St. Innocent's labours, together with those of Archimandrite Macarius in the Altai and Archbishop Nicholas in Japan, give the lie to the idea that Russian Orthodoxy in this period was "ossified" or "paralysed". In fact, the labours of these men, supported by the Tsars, proved both the vitality of Russian Orthodoxy and the continuing vitality of the Church-State "symphony".

In the Tsar's encouragement of the American mission "was reflected, as in a drop of water, the essence of the politics of the Third Rome - the widening of *the boundaries of the Church.* In her expansion to Alaska and Northern California, to the possessions of Japan and China, and to the sands of Central Asia, Russia derived not only commercial and military-strategic advantages (although these, too, were not of little importance), but brought to the new lands the light of her Orthodox Faith and spirituality. Besides, as has already been pointed out, she related to the peoples of these new lands with great respect. In contrast to the expansion of the Roman Catholic church, the Russian Orthodox Church and state did not convert one people to Christianity *by forcible means*! Amidst the *pagan* tribes of Siberia, the North, the Far East and America, the Russian spiritual missions were very active in preaching the Word of God, building churches and monasteries, hospitals, homes for invalids and the elderly, providing medical help and what would now be called 'social security', often quarrelling because of these good works with the local secular bosses. As regards the *Mohammedan* peoples of Central Asia and the Caucasus, here there was almost no missionary work. After the unsuccessful attempts to create spiritual missions for the Tatars and Kalmyks in the 18th century, Russia renounced special ecclesiastical missions in Mohammedan areas distinguished for their strong predeliction for Islam. Orthodoxy was not imposed on the Mohammedan people; they were left to live freely in accordance with their own customs, but Orthodox churches naturally arose on their lands for the Russians who had settled there, so that all those desiring it among those peoples received *the opportunity to learn Orthodoxy*!"

However, in 1867 the Tsar sold Alaska and the Aleutian islands to the United States for $7.2 million. Could the need to pay for the armies in Central Asia have motivated this unexpected decision? Or the cost of defending 10,000 Russians and 40,000 Indians against the expected influx of American explorers and settlers?

A third possibility was the threat from Britain: "The deal was born not of the Russian Empire's rivalry with the United States, but through both

countries' competition with Britain, whose Empire made it the most powerful nation of the age, one with a truly global presence.

"Russia and Britain had already face off in the Crimean War, which had begun in October 1853… Though as the name suggests, the conflict was concentrated on Russia's south-west flank, it also spread to the Pacific, when a fleet of Russian cruisers based in Siberian ports threatened Britain's trading links with California. A combined British and French squadron was assembled at Honolulu and on July 29th 1854 it set sail in pursuit of the Russian ships. Having taken the weakly defended port of Sitka in Alaska, they then headed south for Petropavlovsk, which ended in catastrophe for the allies.

"Even so, Russia remained fearful of British ambitions in the Pacific. Vancouver island, just off the mainland of western Canada, was already a British Crown Colony and the population of neighbouring British Columbia was increasing rapidly, as gold prospectors rushed west. Plans were advanced to incorporate the territory formally into the Empire. This meant that Britain's possessions in North America would now share a land border with Russia.

"Alaska was difficult to defend, given the awesome supply lines, and so Tsar Alexander II decided to sell up. In 1859 he approached both Britain and the US as potential buyers. The former showed little interest, while the latter was too distracted by the impending Civil War to give it enough thought. When the war came to an end in 1865, interest was rekindled and the tsar instructed his ambassador in the US, Edward Stoeckl, to begin formal negotiations with Secretary of State, William Seward. Not only did the potential deal offer a considerable expansion of US territory – at more than 600,000 square miles it is twice the size of Texas – and a strategic location between Russia and British North America, but it was also a useful distraction from the fraught issue of post-Civil War Reconstruction.

"After an all-night negotiating session, the treaty was signed at 4 am on March 30th, 1867. The agreed price was $7,2 million, equivalent to around $20 million today, which works out at about two cents an acre.

"Captain Alexei Peschkurov handed over the territory to his opposite number with the words:

"*By authority from his Majesty, the Emperor of Russia, I transfer to the United States the territory of Alaska.*

"Just a few Russian fur traders and Orthodox priests remained behind and

it was not until the Klondike gold rush of 1896 that Alaska attracted new settlers in numbers…"

However, the Orthodox Aleut Indians also remained behind – it was, after all, their native land. And it is said that they wept as the Russian flag was taken down for the last time… "Although the treaty guaranteed the rights of natives to remain Orthodox Christians, these articles were largely ignored by U.S. officials and Protestant missionaries. At the end of the nineteenth century many Alaskans could speak Russian, English and a native language, but were still considered uncivilized by the authorities. A systematic persecution of the native and Orthodox culture was initiated. Russian and native languages were forbidden to be used in schools. Soon a policy of assimilation was implemented, and the traditional life of the Alaskans began to wane…"

From a financial point of view, the deal was probably a mistake - there were gold deposits under the Alaskan soil. But from a spiritual point of view, too, it was a dubious deal. As we have seen, Alaska, in contrast to Central Asia, had proved to be fertile territory for Russian missionaries, and the Indians were therefore not merely colonial subjects but brothers in Christ. What could justify the abandonment of thousands of brothers in Christ to a heretical government (even if the church buildings remained in the hands of the Orthodox, and permission was granted to the Russian Spiritual Mission to continue its work in Alaska)? Was not the Third Rome obliged to protect the interests of her converts in the New World?

As it turned out, Divine Providence protected the Orthodox Indians where the Russian tsar did not: in 1917 Russia herself came under the yoke of the atheists, so from that point of view it may have been just as well that the Orthodox Alaskans found themselves within the borders of another State.

13. "NEW MAN" AND "UNDERGROUND MAN"

Soon after ascending the throne in 1856, Tsar Alexander II lifted the ban on travel abroad and the limitations on the numbers of university students. Censorship on the press was eased, and the Decembrists, whom Nicholas I had repressed, were allowed to return from exile … These reforms, together with the fact that the leading Slavophiles of the pre-war period, such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, died soon after the war, seemed to indicate that by the beginning of the 1860s the ideological struggle between Slavophiles and Westerners was shifting in favour of the Westerners.

Only this new wave of westernism was much more radical than its predecessor… The generation that came of age after the Crimean War was characterized by a sharp and categorical rejection of the values of their fathers. The latter, whether they were Slavophiles or Westerners, were generally believers in God and lovers of their country. But the sons were almost invariably Westerners – and of the most extreme kind: not believers but positivists and atheists, not liberals but revolutionary socialists.

Perhaps the most typical representative of this new generation was Dmitri Pisarev. "Allow us, youths," he wrote in May, 1861, "to speak, write and publish, allow us to shake off through our natural scepticism those things which have become stale, that clapped-out junk, which you call general authorities." "Here is the concluding word of our youth camp: what can be broken should be broken; that which withstands a blow can stay, but that which will fly off into fragments is rubbish; in any case beat to the right and to the left, no harm will come of it nor can come of it…" "Literature in all its varieties must strike at one point; it must with all its powers emancipate the human person from those various restrictions which make him ashamed of his own thought, caste prejudices, the authority of tradition, *the striving for a common ideal* and all that outdated rubbish which hinders the living man from breathing and developing freely."

In 1862 there appeared two novels that portrayed the "new man": Chernyshevsky's *What is to be Done?* and Turgenev's *Fathers and Sons*... Chernyshevsky gave a positive portrayal of the new man in the figure of Rakhmetev.

"This monolithic titan," writes Orlando Figes, "who was to serve as a model for a whole generation of revolutionaries (including Lenin), renounces all the pleasures of life in order to harden his superhuman will and make himself insensible to the human suffering which the coming revolution is bound to create. He is a puritan and an ascetic: on one occasion he even sleeps on a bed of nails in order to stifle his sexual urges. He trains his body by

gymnastics and lifting weights. He eats nothing but raw steak. He trains his mind in a similar way, reading 'only the essential' (politics and science) for days and nights on end until he has absorbed the wisdom of humankind. Only then does the revolutionary hero set out on his mission to 'work for the benefit of the people'. Nothing diverts him from the cause, not even the amorous attentions of a young and beautiful widow, whom he rejects. The life he leads is rigorous and disciplined: it proceeds like clockwork, with so much time for reading every day, so much time for exercise and so on. Yet (and here is the message of the story) it is only through such selfless dedication that the New Man is able to transcend the alienated existence of the old 'superfluous man'. He finds salvation through politics.

"Allowing the publication of Chernyshevsky's novel was one of the biggest mistakes the tsarist censor ever made: for it converted more people to the cause of the revolution than all the works of Marx and Engels put together (Marx himself learned Russian in order to read it). Plekhanov, the 'founder of Russian Marxism', said that from that novel 'we have all drawn moral strength and faith in a better future'. The revolutionary theorist Tkachev called it the 'gospel' of the movement; Kropotkin the 'banner of Russian youth'. One young revolutionary of the 1860s claimed that there only three great men in history: Jesus Christ, St. Paul and Chernyshevsky. Lenin, whose own ascetic lifestyle bore a disturbing resemblance to Rakhmetev's, read the novel five times in one summer. He later acknowledged that it had been crucial in converting him to the revolutionary movement. 'It completely reshaped me,' he told Valentinov in 1904. 'This is a book which changes one for a whole lifetime.' Chernyshevsky's importance, in Lenin's view, was that he had 'not only showed that every right-thinking and really honest man must be a revolutionary, but also – and this is his greatest merit – what a revolutionary *must be like*'. Rakhmetev, with his superhuman will and selfless dedication to the cause, was the perfect model of the Bolshevik.

"Chernyshevsky's hero was also an inspiration to the nihilistic students of the 1860s. His asceticism, his belief in science, and his rejection of the old moral order appealed to them. Their 'nihilism' entailed a youthful rebellion against the artistic dabbling of their father's generation (the 'men of the forties'); a militant utilitarianism, materialism and belief in progress through the application of scientific methods to society; and a general questioning of all authority, moral and religious, which was manifested in a revolutionary passion to destroy… As Bakunin put it, since the old Russia was rotten to the core, it was 'a creative urge' to destroy it. These were the angry young men of their day. Many of them came from relatively humble backgrounds – the sons of priests, such as Chernyshevsky, for example, or of mixed social origins (raznochintsy) – so their sense of Russia's worthlessness was reinforced by their own feelings of underprivilege. Chernyshevsky, for example, often

expressed a deep hatred and feeling of shame for the backwardness of Saratov province where he had grown up. 'It would be better', he once wrote, 'not to be born at all than to be born a Russian.' There was a long tradition of national self-hatred among the Russian intelligentsia, stemming from the fact that they were so cut off from the ordinary people and had always modelled themselves on the West."

In *Fathers and Sons* Turgenev portrayed the new man in the figure of Bazarov, calling him a "nihilist", that is, "a person who does not take any principle for granted, however much that principle may be revered". Being a "man of the forties" himself, Turgenev had intended him as a caricature of the nihilists, materialist, morally slippery and artistically philistine (although later he would pretend otherwise). Bazarov believed only in natural science: we see him dissecting frogs, and he dies from a disease contracted from dissecting a human corpse. He "takes deliberate pleasure in describing himself and his allies as 'nihilists', by which he means no more than that he, and those who think like him, reject everything that cannot be established by the rational methods of natural science. Truth alone matters: what cannot be established by observation and experiment is useless or harmful ballast – 'romantic rubbish' – which an intelligent man will ruthlessly eliminate. In this heap of irrational nonsense Bazarov includes all that is impalpable, that cannot be reduced to quantitative measurement – literature and philosophy, the beauty of art and the beauty of nature, tradition and authority, religion and intuition, the uncriticised assumptions of conservatives and liberals, of populists and socialist, of landowners and serfs. He believes in strength, will-power, energy, utility, work, in ruthless criticism of all that exists. He wishes to tear off masks, blow up all revered principles and norms. Only irrefutable facts, only useful knowledge, matter. He clashes almost immediately with the touchy, conventional Pavel Kirsanov: 'At present,' he tells him, 'the most useful thing is to deny. So we deny.' 'Everything?' asks Pavel Kirsanov. 'Everything,' 'What? Not only art, poetry… but even… too horrible to utter…' 'Everything.' […] 'So you destroy everything… but surely one must build, too?' 'That's not our business… First one mustclear the ground.'

"The fiery revolutionary agitator Bakunin, who had just then escaped from Siberia to London, was saying something of this kind: the entire rotten structure, the corrupt old world, must be razed to the ground, before something new can be built upon it; what this is to be is not for us to say; we are revolutionaries, our business is to demolish. The new men, purified from the infection of the world of idlers and exploiters, and its bogus values – these men will know what to do. The German social democrat Eduard Bernstein once quoted Marx as saying: *'Anyone who makes plans for after the revolution is a reactionary.'*"

Fr. Seraphim Rose wrote: "The figure of Bazarov in that novel is the type of the 'new men' of the 'sixties' in Russia, simple-minded materialists and determinists, who seriously thought (like D. Pisarev) to find the salvation of mankind in the dissection of the frog, or thought they had proved the non-existence of the human soul by failing to find it in the course of an autopsy. (One is reminded of the Soviet Nihilists, the 'new men' of our own 'sixties', who fail to find God in outer space.) This 'Nihilist' is the man who respects nothing, bows before no authority, accepts (so he thinks) nothing on faith, judges all in the light of a science taken as absolute and exclusive truth, rejects all idealism and abstraction in favor of the concrete and factual. He is the believer, in a word, in the 'nothing-but', in the rejection of everything men have considered 'higher', the things of the mind and spirit, to the lower or 'basic': matter, sensation, the physical…"

The growth of nihilism fairly soon elicited an anti-liberal reaction in the Russian government. Thus in 1866, Count Dmitri Tolstoy, a relative of the novelist, was appointed Minister of Education. As A.N. Wilson writes, "he caused an immediate about-turn in educational policies. He regarded the superficial materialist outlook of the young to have been caused by not doing enough Latin and Greek, and he abolished the teaching of science in all Russian grammar schools. The police, the army, the Holy Synod were all, likewise, put into reverse gear…"

However, these measures were reactionary rather than truly regenerative; they were reactions to the illness that treated the symptoms but not the cause; they did not bring health to the patient – that is, educated society, which continued, on the whole, to despise the government and all its works. Profound exposures of the nihilism of the "new man" would appear: in the later novels of Dostoyevsky, in some of the writings of the Optina elders, and, much later, in the collection of essays by ex-Marxists entitled *Vekhi* (Signposts). The State, however, produced very little in the way of a creative response to this threat to its very existence; and this failure must be counted as one of the causes of the Russian revolution…

The abolition of the teaching of science was an especially foolish step. For it was not real science that was the enemy, but the philosophy of materialism masquerading in the guise of science. Since the publication of Darwin's *Origin of the Species* in 1859, science had become the god of the age, worshipped both by scientists and by non-scientists, being not only the engine of material prosperity but the foundation of all "true" philosophy. As was noted above, the essential reading for the Russian "new man" was politics and science. Darwinism was immediately greeted with the greatest enthusiasm by liberals and revolutionaries of all kinds. For it promised to remove the need for any Divine Creator or Law-Giver, reducing the origin of all life to pure chance.

As Marx wrote to Engels on reading *The Origin of Species* in 1860: "The book contains the basis in natural history for our view." Lenin was no less enamoured of it. John P. Koster writes: "The only piece of artwork in Lenin's office was a kitsch statue of an ape sitting on a heap of books – including *Origin of Species* – and contemplating a human skull… The ape and the skull were a symbol of his faith, the Darwinian faith that man is a brute, the world is a jungle, and individual lives are irrelevant…"

Darwinism needed to be countered on both the scientific and the philosophical/religious levels; but no such refutation was forthcoming until Dostoyevsky's assault on "half-science" in *The Devils.* By this term he meant Darwinism and materialist philosophies that claim to be based on science, as opposed to true science, which humbly remains within the proper bounds of empiricism and does not deny Revelation. One of his characters described "half-science" as "that most terrible scourge of mankind, worse than pestilence, famine, or war, and quite unknown till our present century. Half-science is a despot such as has never been known before, a despot that has its own priests and slaves, a despot before whom everybody prostrates himself with love and superstitious dread, such as has been inconceivable till now, before whom science trembles and surrenders in a shameful way."

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The debate over science and the "new man" was linked with a deeper debate over rationalism and irrationalism. The "new man" was the supreme rationalist; he allowed no criterion of truth other than "reason" understood in the narrowest sense. Paradoxically, as the revolution was to demonstrate with irrefutable power, this kind of rationalism was closely linked with the profoundest irrationalism and the irruption of wildly destructive and anti-rational forces into the human soul and human society as a whole…

In the eighteenth century the Scottish philosopher David Hume had argued that "reason alone can never be a motive to any action of the will". Reason "can never oppose passion in the direction of the will". For "'tis not contrary to reason to prefer the destruction of the whole world to the scratching of my finger."

A hundred years after Hume, when the most extreme rationalism and positivism was all the rage among the Russian intelligentsia, Fyodor Mikhailovich Dostoyevsky, quite independently from the philosophers, again drew the attention of his readers to the sea of the irrational that surrounds the small island of our rational minds and that threatens, by its dark power, to overwhelm reason altogether. In *Notes from Underground* (1864), his anti-hero

challenges all the premises of nineteenth-century society, not on rational grounds, but simply because he sees no reason to be reasonable. "I'd sell the world for a kopeck just to be left in peace. Let the world perish, or let me drink my tea? I tell you, I'd let the world perish, just so long as I could always drink my tea. Did you know that or not? Well, I know that I'm no good, perverse, selfish and lazy."

And why shouldn't he be? What reason can possibly persuade a no good to be good? "Trust them [the rationalist moralists] to prove to you that a single drop of your own fat is bound to be dearer to you, when it comes down to it, than a hundred thousand human lives and that this conclusion is an answer to all this talk about virtue and duty, and other ravings and superstitions."

So much for Kant's categorical imperative and Bentham's utilitarian ethics! For it is no good "proving" to someone that a certain course of action is in his own best interests, or in the best interests of mankind as a whole, if he simply doesn't *want* to do it. For "one's own free, unrestrained choice, one's own whim, be it the wildest, one's own fancy, sometimes worked up to a frenzy – that is the most advantageous advantage that cannot be fitted into any table or scale and that causes every system and every theory to crumble into dust on contact. And where did these sages pick up the notion that man must have something that they feel is a normal and virtuous set of wishes; what makes them think that man's will must be reasonable and in accordance with his own interests? All man actually needs is *independent* will, at all costs and whatever the consequences.

"Speaking of will, I'm damned if I – …

"I will admit that reason is a good thing. No argument about that. But reason is only reason, and it only satisfies man's rational requirements. Desire, on the other hand, encompasses everything from reason down to scratching oneself. And although, when we're guided by our desires, life may often turn into a messy affair, it's still life and not a series of extractions of square roots.

"I, for instance, instinctively want to live, to exercise all the aspects of life in me and not only reason, which amounts to perhaps one-twentieth of the whole.

"And what does reason know? It knows only what it has had time to learn. Many things will always remain unknown to it. That must be said even if there's nothing encouraging in it.

"Now human nature is just the opposite. It acts as an entity, using everything it has, conscious and unconscious, and even if it deceives us, it lives. I suspect, ladies and gentlemen, that you're looking at me with pity, wondering how I can fail to understand that an enlightened, cultured man, such as the man of the future, could not deliberately wish to harm himself. It's sheer mathematics to you. I agree, it is mathematics. But let me repeat to you for the hundredth time that there is one instance when a man can wish upon himself, in full awareness, something harmful, stupid and even completely idiotic. He will do it in order to *establish his right* to wish for the most idiotic things and not to be obliged to have only sensible wishes. But what if a quite absurd whim, my friends, turns out to be the most advantageous thing on earth for us, as sometimes happens? Specifically, it may be more advantageous to us than any other advantages, even when it most obviously harms us and goes against all the sensible conclusions of our reason about our interest – because, whatever else, it leaves us our most important, most treasured possession: our individuality…"

In *Notes from Underground* we see the first in a long line of anti-heroes – terrorists, murderers, suicides – who crowd the pages of Dostoyevsky's later novels, and for whom, since God did not exist, everything was permitted. As Shestov writes, all his later novels are, as it were, footnotes to *Notes from Underground*. Common to them all is a solipsistic view of the world according to which nothing matters outside their own pride and their own will.

In another "fantastical story" of his later years, *The Dream of a Ridiculous Man* (1878), Dostoyevsky's anti-hero says: "The conviction… dawned upon me quite independently of my will that nothing made any difference in this world. I had suspected this for a very long time, but I only became fully aware of it during this past year. I suddenly felt that it really made no difference to me whether or not the world existed. I began to feel with my whole being that *nothing had happened while I'd been alive.* At first I felt that, to make up for it, many things had happened before. Later, however, I realized that this was an illusion – nothing had happened before either. Little by little, I discovered that nothing will ever happen. Then I stopped getting angry at people and almost stopped noticing them. This change manifested itself even in the smallest things. When I walked along the street, for instance, I would bump into people, I was certainly not absorbed in thought, for what did I have to think of by that time? I just didn't care about anything any more. If only I could've answered some of the many questions that tormented me, but I hadn't found a single answer. Then I became indifferent to everything, and all the questions faded away.

"It was only later that I learned the truth…"

"The truth" is not the common-sense, rationally ordered world-view of civilised man, of the "anti-hill" and the "crystal palace", in which two plus two always equals four, everything is planned in a rational way to satisfy man's rationally understood needs, and miracles do not exist. This supra-rational truth is revealed to the ridiculous man just as he is about to shoot himself. It is the world before the fall, but which is still accessible to the heart of man, in which there reign perfect love and joy and a supra-rational kind of knowledge, a world in which, contrary to the thoughts of the underground and ridiculous men, *everything matters, everything i*s interconnected with everything else, and man is responsible for *everything and everyone.*

Dostoyevsky was planning to write about this in the second half of *Notes from Underground.* However, it proved difficult for him to create the positive, Christ-like character that could incarnate the supra-rational truth. His first such hero, Prince Myshkin in *The Idiot,* was a relative failure; and only in his last novel, *The Brothers Karamazov*, in the characters of the Elder Zossima and Alyosha, do we find successful images of heavenly good to place against the hellish evil in the hearts of his other characters.

For Dostoyevsky, unlike other "explorers of the unconscious" such as Nietzsche and Freud, saw *two, opposing* spheres of "unreason", that is, that which is incomprehensible and unattainable to the rational mind: the "unreason" or "anti-reason" of the underground man, enclosed and entombed in his pride and hatred, and the "unreason" or, better, "supra-reason" of the saint, open to all and everything, but above all and judging everything. For, as St. Paul puts it, "the foolishness of God is wiser than man… He who is spiritual judges all things, yet he himself is rightly judged by no one" (I Corinthians 1.25, 2.15). Paradoxically, in Dostoyevsky's view, the underground man, having plumbed the one abyss, that of his own solipsistic hell, could more easily "convert" to an understanding of, and participation in, the other abyss, the abyss of infinite, all-embracing love and "supra-reason", than the "civilised" rationalists. Hence the Raskolnikovs and Shatovs and Dmitri Karamazovs, who, while keeping their minds in hell, do not despair - and catch a glimpse of Paradise.

It is instructive to compare Dostoyevsky with Nietzsche and Freud. Nietzsche was a true underground man, who wittily and unerringly cut through the pretences of civilised society. But he ended in the madhouse because he failed to see that there was another world, the supra-rational world of love that Dostoyevsky saw. As for Freud, his vision was more superficial than either because his rationalist determinism blinded him to the fact that that man *freely* chooses to live in the abyss of sin…

Russian educated society comprehended neither abyss. Being hardly less

fallen than the underground men of Dostoyevsky's novels, it, too, simply followed its own desires. And if these desires were not as obviously perverted as those of the underground men, they were no less selfish for all that. The difference was that society had invented, with the help of the philosophers, quite "reasonable", even "Christian" reasons for following its selfish desires - reasons, moreover, that were supposedly perfectly compatible with the love of God and man, and even with the new idol of the age, half-science…

14. GENTRY, PEASANT AND ECCLESIASTICAL JUSTICE

In 1864 the law courts were reformed; this was perhaps the most successful, certainly the most popular, of all Tsar Alexander's reforms.

As S.S. Oldenburg writes, "Russian justice, founded on the *Juridical Statutes* of 1864, was maintained from that time on a high level; the 'Gogol characters' in the world of the courts departed to the sphere of legend. A careful attitude to those on trial, a very broad provision of rights for the defence, an excellent selection of judges – all this constituted the subject of justified pride among Russians, and corresponded to the mood of society. The juridical statutes were one of the few laws which society not only respected, but which it was ready to defend with zeal from the authorities when the latter considered it necessary to introduce qualifications and corrections into a liberal law for the sake of a more successful struggle against crime."

Lebedev writes that the reform of the law courts "came down to making Russian jurisprudence on all levels and in all regions maximally just, incorruptible, based not on the whim of judges, but on the law and (which is very important!) on *the public understanding* of the law and its application in every individual case! For the resolution of civil suits, property and other quarrels, and also small criminal cases there were created *special* 'volost' courts' for the peasants. For all the other classes there were created two systems – 'secular courts' (for civil matters and petty criminal ones) that were *elected* by uyezd and city assembly, and 'circuit courts', the members of which were *appointed* by the State. In the latter particularly important matters and major criminal cases were examined. In criminal cases in the circuit courts 'jurors' too part; they had been chosen by lot from the population. All this, that is, the investigation in court, took place publicly, in the presence of the people. The final decision belonged, not to the judge, but to *the jurors,* who pronounced a 'verdict' after a secret consultation amongst themselves. On the basis of the verdict the judges formulated the sentence. The court did not depend on any institutions of the authorities. Thus was created the most perfect juridical system in the world (!) of that time, which quickly taught all *the feelings of legality* and a good *consciousness of one's rights.* In this connection humiliating corporal punishments were abolished, and the system of punishments was in general made softer."

Max Hayward writes that "the main criticism of the post-Reform legal system was, in fact, that the juries tended to be far too lenient, and that it was therefore difficult to obtain convictions in criminal cases, whether or not they had a political aspect. This was probably indicative as much of traditional Russian sympathy for the unfortunate as of automatic opposition to the authorities, or of indifference to the law as such. Even so, service on juries

undoubtedly gave many Russians of all classes (including peasants) a taste for 'due process' which in time was bound to lead to a more widespread understanding that legal formality is not incompatible with justice and mercy".

Of course, the introduction of the jury system on the Anglo-Saxon model did not prevent some extraordinary miscarriages of justice, notably the acquittal of Zasulich in 1878. Sir Geoffrey Hosking describes the case: "In the 1870s, cases with any political element were withdrawn from the investigating magistrates and handed back to the police. This did not prevent a remarkable case in 1878, involving the attempted murder of the Governor of St. Petersburg, General Trepov, in retribution for his ordering the flogging of a political prisoner. The law stated that corporal punishment could only be applied to members of the lower, tax-paging estates. Bogoliubov was a meschanin by origin, so that Trepov was legally justified in ordering the punishment. But in the eyes of the radicals, Bogoliubov had by his membership of their movement promoted himself to a kind of aristocracy of the spirit, so that Trepov's act was an unforgivable breach of elementary decency.

"On 24 January 1878, a young radical, Vera Zasulich, requested an audience with Trepov. Waiting till she was summoned, she went into his office, took a revolver out of her muff and, in the sight of several witnesses, shot at him, wounding him. The government sought to make an example of Zasulich, as it had of Nechayev [see below], by trying her before a normal jury and having her case reported in the newspapers. Minister of Justice Count Palen asked the presiding judge, A.F. Koni, whether he could guarantee a verdict of 'guilty' in such a clear-cut case: 'In this damned case the government has the right to expect special services from the court'. Koni replied, 'Your Excellency, the court gives verdicts, not services'. These were two concepts of justice which it was difficult to reconcile. The press supported Koni's view and backed it up with human-interest stories about Zasulich; even the staunch monarchist Dostoevskii wrote that 'to punish this young woman would be inappropriate and superfluous'.

"In the event, the defence counsel, falling in with this mood, did not argue about the evidence of the crime, but evoked Zasulich's unhappy youth in exile under police supervision, and praised her as a 'woman who had no personal interest in her crime, a woman who bound up her crime with the fight for an idea', and appealed to the jury as a 'court of the people's conscience'. They duly acquitted her, to the deafening applause of the public. The outcome of this case was a remarkable revelation of the rift between the government and public opinion, and moved the government to transfer all further cases involving violence against officials to military courts.

"All the same, the reformed law courts created a whole new profession which was to prove very important to Russia's future: among its future members were Kerenskii and Lenin. This was the advokatura, the corporation of defence counsels, or sworn attorneys."

However, the fact that Kerensky and Lenin were among the members of this new class of lawyers reminds us that, whatever the undoubted virtues of the Russian justice system, the fact that it was based on western models meant that inevitably a new, western spirit, the spirit of the human rights philosophy, was introduced into Russian jurisprudence…

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Moreover, besides the westernised justice introduced by the reforms of 1864, there was another, *peasant* concept of justice in Russia. "The Emancipation," writes Figes, "had liberated the serfs from the judicial tyranny of their landlords but it had not incorporated them in the world ruled by law, which included the rest of society. Excluded from the written law administered through the civil courts, the newly liberated peasants were kept in a sort of legal apartheid after 1861. The tsarist regime looked upon them as a cross between savages and children, and subjected them to magistrates appointed from the gentry. Their legal rights were confined to the peasant-class [volost'] courts, which operated on the basis of local custom."

This customary law of the peasants contained a distinctive world-view that had affinities both with Orthodoxy and with the revolution, - hence its potential for both good and evil - with its own set of moral precepts. "True," writes Figes, who emphasizes the potential for evil, "these were not always applied uniformly. The peasant-class courts often functioned in a random manner, deciding cases on the basis of the litigants' reputations and connections, or on the basis of which side was prepared to bribe the elected judges with the most vodka. Yet, amidst all this chaos, there could be discerned some pragmatic concepts of justice, arising from the peasants' daily lives, which had crystallized into more-or-less universal legal norms, albeit with minor regional variations.

"Three legal ideas, in particular, shape the peasant revolutionary mind. The first was the concept of family ownership. The assets of the peasant household (the livestock, the tools, the crops, the buildings and their contents, but not the land beneath them) were regarded as the common property of the family. Every member of the household was deemed to have an equal right to use these assets, including those not yet born. The patriarch of the household, the *bol'shak*, it is true, had an authoritarian influence over the running of the

farm and the disposal of its assets. But customary law made it clear that he was expected to act with the consent of the other adult members of the family and that, on his death, he could not bequeath any part of the household property, which was to remain in the common ownership of the family under a new *bol'shak* (usually the eldest son). If the *bol'shak* mismanaged the family farm, or was too often drunk and violent, the commune could replace him under customary law with another household member. The only way the family property could be divided was through the partition of an extended household into smaller units, according to the methods set out by local customary law. In all regions of Russia this stipulated that the property was to be divided on an equal basis between all the adult males, with provision being made for the elderly and unmarried women. The principles of family ownership and egalitarian partition were deeply ingrained in Russian peasant culture. This helps to explain the failure of the Stolypin land reforms (1906-17), which, as part of their programme to create a stratum of well-to-do capitalist farmers, attempted to convert the family property of the peasant household into the private property of the *bol'shak,* thus enabling him to bequeath it to one or more of his sons. The peasant revolution of 1917 made a clean sweep of these reforms, returning to the traditional legal principles of family ownership.

"The peasant family farm was organized and defined according to the labour principle, the second major peasant legal concept. Membership of the household was defined by active participation in the life of the farm (or, as the peasants put it, 'eating from the common pot') rather than by blood or kinship ties. An outsider adopted by the family who lived and worked on the farm was usually viewed as a full member of the household with equal rights to those of the blood relatives, whereas a son of the family who left the village to earn his living elsewhere eventually ceased to be seen as a household member. This same attachment of rights to labour could be seen on the land as well. The peasants believed in a sacred link between land and labour. The land belonged to no one but God, and could not be bought or sold. But every family had the right to support itself from the land on the basis of its own labour, and the commune was there to ensure its equal distribution between them. On this basis – that the land should be in the hands of those who tilled it – the squires did not hold their land rightfully and the hungry peasants were justified in their struggle to take it from them. A constant battle was fought between the written law of the state, framed to defend the property rights of the landowners, and the customary law of the peasants, used by them to defend their own transgressions of these property rights. Under customary law, for example, no one thought it wrong when a peasant stole wood from the landlord's forest, since the landlord had more wood than he could personally use and, as the proverb said, 'God grew the forest for everyone'. The state categorized as 'crimes' a whole range of activities which

peasant custom did not: poaching and grazing livestock on the squire's land; gathering mushrooms and berries from his forest; picking fruit from his orchards; fishing in his ponds, and so on. Customary law was a tool which the peasants used to subvert a legal order that in their view maintained the unjust domination of the landowners and the biggest landowner of all: the state. It is no coincidence that the revolutionary land legislation of 1917-18 based itself on the labour principles found in customary law.

"The subjective approach to the law – judging the merits of a case according to the social and economic position of the parties concerned – was the third specific aspect of the peasantry's legal thinking which had an affinity with the revolution. It was echoed in the Bolshevik concept of 'revolutionary justice', the guiding principle of the People's Courts of 1917-18, according to which a man's social class was taken as the decisive factor in determining his guilt or innocence. The peasants considered stealing from a rich man, especially by the poor, a much less serious offence than stealing from a man who could barely feed himself and his family. In the peasants' view it was even justified, as we have seen, to kill someone guilty of a serious offence against the community. And to murder a stranger from outside the village was clearly not as bad as killing a fellow villager, Similarly, whereas deceiving a neighbour was seen by the peasants as obviously immoral, cheating on a landlord or a government official was not subject to any moral censure; such 'cunning' was just one of the many everyday forms of passive resistance used by peasants to subvert an unjust established order. Within the context of peasant society this subjective approach was not without its own logic, since the peasants viewed justice in terms of its direct practical effects on their own communities rather than in general or abstract terms. But it could often result in the sort of muddled thinking that made people call the peasants 'dark'. In *The Criminal*, for example, Chekhov tells the true story of a peasant who was brought to court for stealing a bolt from the railway tracks to use as a weight on his fishing tackle. He fails to understand his guilt and in trying to justify himself repeatedly talks of 'we' (the peasants of his village): 'Bah! Look how many years we have been removing bolts, and God preserves us, and here you are talking about a crash, people killed. We do not remove all of them – we always leave some. We do not act without thinking. We do understand.'

"Here, in this moral subjectivity, was the root of the peasant's instinctive anarchism. He lived outside the realm of the state's laws – and that is where he chose to stay. Centuries of serfdom had bred within the peasant a profound mistrust of all authority outside his own village. What he wanted was *volia*, the ancient peasant concept of freedom and autonomy without restraints from the powers that be. 'For hundreds of years,' wrote Gorky, 'the Russian peasant has dreamt of a state with no right to influence the will of the

individual and his freedom of action, a state without power over man.' That peasant dream was kept alive by subversive tales of Stenka Razin and Emelian Pugachev, those peasant revolutionaries of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whose mythical images continued as late as the 1900s to be seen by the peasants flying as ravens across the Volga announcing the advent of utopia. And there were equally fabulous tales of a 'Kingdom of Opona', somewhere on the edge of the flat earth, where the peasants lived happily, undisturbed by gentry or state. Groups of peasants even set out on expeditions in the far north in the hope of finding this arcadia.

"As the state attempted to extend its bureaucratic control into the countryside during the late nineteenth century, the peasants sought to defend their autonomy by developing ever more subtle forms of passive resistance to it. What they did, in effect, was to set up a dual structure of administration in the villages: a formal one, with its face to the state, which remained inactive and inefficient; and an informal one, with its face to the peasants, which was quite the opposite. The village elders and tax collectors elected to serve in the organs of state administration in the villages (*obshchestva*) and the volost townships (*upravy*) were, in the words of one frustrated official, 'highly unreliable and unsatisfactory', many of them having been deliberately chosen for their incompetence in order to sabotage government work. There were even cases where the peasants elected the village idiot as their elder. Meanwhile, the real centre of power remained in the *mir*, in the old village assembly dominated by the patriarchs. The power of the tsarist state never really penetrated the village, and this remained its fundamental weakness until 1917, when the power of the state was removed altogether and the village gained its *volia*."

The contrast between the two kinds of Russian justice – the individualist-objective westernised justice of the gentry, and the collectivist-subjective justice of the peasantry - was rooted in the schism in the Russian nation that went back to Peter the Great. The entrenchment of the system of serfdom, accompanied by encroachments on the people's traditionally Orthodox way of life, had both divided the people within itself and created two conflicting concepts of justice: the gentry's concept, which sought to entrench the gains they had made in law, a law based primarily on western ideas of the rights of the individual citizen, and the peasants' concept, which rejected the "justice" of that settlement and sought their own justice, a justice based primarily on the rights of the majority community, in its place. After 1861, the situation, and the inter-relationship between the two nations and two concepts of justice, began to develop in a very complex and confusing way.

On the one hand, through the reforms of the period 1861-64, gentry justice began to extend its influence, as we have seen, into the countryside. It was

sincerely argued by proponents of the reforms that this influence would ultimately be to the benefit of the peasants themselves, and of the country as a whole. But the peasants did not see it that way: centuries of not-unmerited distrust had done their work, and they chose to cling onto their own justice, and nurture their former grievances.

On the other hand, as the divisions between classes and social estates began to weaken and social mobility, both upwards and downwards, became more common, peasant justice began to extend *its* influence upwards, especially into the younger generation of the nobility and *raznochintsy*. Of course, the "Russian socialism" of the peasants" was very different in its psychological and religious base from the western socialism that attracted the radical youth, as the youths discovered when they tried and failed to introduce their ideas into the countryside in the 1870s. Nevertheless, there was enough in common between the collectivism and anarchism of the two world-views to make their eventual explosive union in 1917 feasible – especially after a new generation of peasants had grown up that was more literate than their fathers and more prepared to challenge their authority…

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Besides the new gentry and the old peasant concepts of justice, there was a third, still older kind: the justice of the Church. While this, naturally, tended to focus on strictly ecclesiastical issues, in one area in particular it came into potential conflict with the way in which gentry ideas of justice were developing: marriage and divorce. The novelist Lev Tolstoy discovered these problems when he advised his sister Masha to divorce, and he included discussion of them in his famous novel *Anna Karenina* (1877).

"Over the course of the nineteenth century," writes Rosamund Bartlett, "the Orthodox Church had made marital separation more rather than less difficult. Petitions for divorce had to be made to the diocesan authorities, and entailed an expensive, bureaucratic and lengthy process, with nine separate stages. Adultery, furthermore, could only proved with the testimony of witnesses, as Alexey Alexandrovich discovers to his horror when he goes to consult the 'famous St. Petersburg lawyer' in Part Four of *Anna Karenina*. It is thus hardly surprising so few petitions were made – seventy-one in the whole of Russia in 1860, and only seven made on the grounds of adultery. But with the Great Reforms, urban growth and the expansion of education came new attitudes towards marriage, and pressure to simplify and update divorce, so it was a constant topic of discussion in the ecclesiastical press in the second half of the nineteenth century. A committee set up by reformers in 1870 proposed transferring divorce proceedings to the civil courts, thus saving the ecclesiastical authorities from having to investigate such matters, 'which are

full of descriptions of suggestive and disgusting scenes, in which the whole stench of depravity is often collected.' In May 1873, just when Tolstoy was starting *Anna Karenina,* the Holy Synod overwhelmingly rejected this proposal, as it did a proposal to introduce civil marriage (which had already been introduced elsewhere in Europe) on the grounds that it was 'legalised fornication'. Nevertheless, the number of divorces rose steadily, from 795 in 1866 to 947 in 1875…"

A decline in sexual morality is an invariable sign of religious decline. Russia was to prove no exception. However, the Church, while relaxing her rules to some degree, always drew the line at civil marriage, even after the revolution…

15. THE JEWS UNDER ALEXANDER II

The first of Alexander's great reforms, but the one having perhaps the most profound long-term consequences for the empire as a whole and for the tsar in particular, related to the Jews. In 1856, in the coronation manifesto, the Jews were placed on the same basis as the rest of the population in relation to military service. In the same manifesto, all their (very large) debts incurred in non-payment of taxes over the previous years were forgiven.

"More expansively than this," writes Alexander Solzhenitsyn, "Alexander II expressed his intention to resolve the Jewish question – and in the most general sense favourably [for the Jews]. For the whole way in which the question was posed was radically changed. If under Nicholas I the government had set itself the task, first, of reforming the inner way of life of the Jews, gradually clearing it up through productive labour and education, in this way leading to the removal of administrative restrictions; then under Alexander II, by contrast, the government began by removing external restrictions and impediments, without searching deeply into possible inner causes of Jewish isolation and sickliness, and hoping that then all remaining problems would be solved of themselves; it began 'with the intention of merging this people with the native inhabitants of the country', as the sovereign command of 1856 put it."

During the rest of the reign almost all the restrictions on the Jews were dismantled. Jews were now to be found in all parts of the empire, and the share of trade and industry owned by them rapidly increased – as did their overall numbers, to almost 4 million by 1880. The Jews also benefited from other reforms, such as the abolition of the poll-tax on urban dwellers in 1863.

However, the emancipation of the serfs hit the Jews hard in three ways. First, the social gap between the free Jews and peasant serfs was abolished – the peasants were now as free as the Jews. Secondly, the liberated peasants were now freed from the strict prohibition of buying and selling goods through an appointed middle-man – who in the western provinces was almost always a Jew. Thirdly, the government's establishment of agricultural credit at very reasonable rates, together with the development of consumer and credit associations, squeezed out the Jew's role as provider of credit (at extortionate rates).

Alexander I's plan to draw the Jews into agriculture was abandoned by Alexander II. In 1866 he rescinded the special decrees on transforming the Jews into farmers in the South-Western region of "New Russia". Since they had proved incapable of working the land independently, the Jews were given the opportunity to become craftsmen and merchants. They were

allowed to buy out the land plots they had been given, and then to resell them at great profit.

However, this measure created some further problems. For the Russian peasants who were neighbours of the Jewish colonists were angry that, while they did not have enough land, the Jews had been given more than enough – and were then able to lease the land out to the Russians at a high price. It was this fact that led in part to the sacking of several Jewish settlements during the disturbances of 1881-1882.

Alexander's reforms with regard to Jewish military recruitment also did not reap the results hoped for. The Jews very often did not respond to the call-up. Thus in the period 1876-1883 31.6% of Jews called up did not respond – the figure throughout the Empire was 0.19%.

When the government offered privileges in military service to those with education, the Jews suddenly converted to the idea of accepting Russian education. By 1887 13.5% of all university students in the country were Jews, and the figures were much higher in cities such as Kharkov and Odessa. According to the theory, this should have been a good thing – it was the government's aim to assimilate the Jews into Russian culture through education. However, Russian education in this period was rapidly becoming radicalized. And so the institutions that, as it was hoped, would make the Jews into model Russian citizens and patriots in fact turned them into – revolutionaries… Thus Solzhenitsyn writes: "It is precisely under Alexander II, when the restrictions on Jewish life in Russia were so weakened, that Jewish names begin to be encountered amidst the revolutionaries… In the student disturbances of 1861 we encounter Mikhoels, Utin and Gen."

Again, David Vital writes: "A breakdown based on official records of the calling, social status, and origin of 1,054 revolutionaries arrested, tried, condemned, and sent into punitive exile or placed under police surveillance in the course of the round-up of dissidents in 1873-7 showed that 68 – 6.5 per cent – were Jews. Of 79 condemned to exile 12 were Jews: 15.2 per cent. These were not immensely large figures, but they do illustrate the fact that the Jewish contingent was already strikingly in excess of the Jewish proportion of the total population of the empire."

In fact, the exposure of the younger generation of Jews to goy literature was the cause of a profound change within Jewry itself. Many young fanatics who had immersed themselves in the study of the Talmud now abandoned Talmudism, and even the external appearance of Talmudic Jewry, and immersed themselves instead in Belinsky, Dobroliubov, Chernyshevsky, Pisarev and Nekrasov. They became socialists and joined the populist

movement [narodnichestvo], distancing themselves more and more from their own people.

Meanwhile, most Jews remained fenced off by Talmudic edicts from Russian culture and even the Russian language. "The eminent Jewish-Russian lawyer, Genrikh Sliozberg," write Kyril Fitzlyon and Tatiana Browning, "never forgot the 'real grief' of his family and relations when they discovered that his father had sent him to a Russian grammar school. His school uniform they found particularly irritating, sinful even. It was, they thought, 'an apostate's garb', and his mother and grandmother cried bitterly every time they saw him in it.' Again, 'the Russian-Jewish revolutionary, Lev Deutsch, writing in 1923, clearly remembered the time when the Jews 'considered it sinful to learn Russian, and its use was allowed only if absolutely essential and, of course, only for speaking to Christians (the goyim).'"

Even among the russified Jewish intelligentsia voices were heard warning against complete assimilation. Thus in 1868 Perets Smolenskin warned that, in adapting to the general culture, the Jews should preserve their national spiritual character. And the Petersburg newspapers *Rassvet [Dawn]* and *Russkij Evrej [Russian Jew]* "strengthened the attraction of Jewish youth towards the study of the Jewish past and present life. At the end of the 70s and beginning of the 80s there arose a watershed between the cosmopolitan and nationalist tendencies in Russian Jewry. 'In essence the leaders of *Rassvet* no longer believed in the truth of assimilation… *Rassvet,* without realising it, went along the path of … the excitation of national self-consciousness… it had a vividly expressed national bias… the illusions of russification… were dispelled…'"

Also concerned to conserve the identity of Talmudic Judaism was a foreign organization, the Alliance Israélite Universelle (in Hebrew: Khaburi Menitsi Indrumim, "Brotherhood Arousing the Sleepy"), which was founded in 1860 in Paris with a Central Committee led by the Minister of Justice, Adolphe Crémieux. It was the first of a series of national Jewish organizations, such as the Anglo-Jewish Association in Great Britain, the Hilfsverein der Deutschen Juden in Germany and the Israelitische Allianz zu Wien in Austria, which began to campaign for Jewish rights in this period.

Although the Alliance considered itself to be motivated by universalist sentiments, it did not disguise the fact that its aim was the defence of the Jewish faith: "Universal union is among our aspirations without any doubt, and we consider all men our brothers, but just as the family comes before strangers in the order of affection, so religion inspires and memory of common oppression fortifies a family sentiment that in the ordinary course of life surpasses others… Finally, there is the decisive consideration for not

going beyond the religious confraternity: all other important faiths are represented in the world by nations – embodied, that is to say, in governments that have a special interest and an official duty to represent and speak for them. Ours alone is without this important advantage; it corresponds neither to a state nor to a society nor again to a specific territory: it is no more than a rallying-cry for scattered individuals – the very people whom it is therefore essential to bring together."

The Alliance was soon interceding for Russian Jews. Thus In 1866 Crémieux traveled to St. Petersburg to successfully defend Jews of Saratov, who had been accused in a case of "blood libel".

Meanwhile, writes Solzhenitsyn, "the newly-created Alliance (whose emblem was the Mosaic tablets of the law over the earthly globe), according to the report of the Russian ambassador from Paris, already enjoyed "exceptional influence on Jewish society in all States". All this put not only the Russian government, but also Russian society on their guard. [The baptised Jew] Jacob Brafmann also agitated intensively against the Alliance Israélite Universelle. He affirmed that the Alliance, 'like all Jewish societies, has a two-faced character (its official documents tell the government one thing, but its secret documents another)', that the Alliance's task was 'to guard Judaism from the assimilation with Christian civilization that was harmful to it'…

"The pre-revolutionary *Jewish Encyclopaedia* writes that in the 70s in the Russian press 'voices in defence of the Jews began to be heard less frequently… In Russian society the thought began to be entrenched that the Jews of all countries were united by a powerful political organisation, the central administration of which was concentrated in the Alliance Israélite Universelle'. So its creation produced in Russia, and perhaps not only in Russia, a reaction that was the reverse of that aimed at by the Alliance."

The leader of this trend in Russian thought was I.S. Aksakov, who wrote: "The Jews in the Pale of Settlement constitute a 'state within a state', with its own administrative and judicial organs, and with a national government – a state whose centre lies outside Russia, abroad, whose highest authority is the Alliance Israélite Universelle in Paris."

In 1869 the baptized Jew Jacob Brafmann published *Kniga Kagala (The Book of the Kahal)*, in which, on the basis of a detailed translation of the acts of the Minsk kahal at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th centuries, he exposed and interpreted the kahal system, demonstrating the complete rightlessness of the majority of the members of the Jewish community. In 1976 the *New Jewish Encyclopaedia* confirmed that the material used by Brafmann "is

genuine and the translation of it quite accurate". And in 1994 the *Russian Jewish Encyclopaedia* declared that "the documents published by Brafmann are a valuable source for the study of the history of the Jews in Russia at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century".

"Brafmann asserted that 'State laws cannot annihilate that harmful power hidden in Jewish self-government… According to his words, this organization is not limited to local kahals… but encompasses, he says, the Jewish people throughout the world… and in consequence of this the Christian peoples cannot be delivered from Jewish exploitation until everything that aids the isolation of the Jews is destroyed'. Brafmann supported 'the view of the Talmud as not so much a codex of a religio-national character, but rather "a civil-political codex", which went "against the flow of the political and moral development of Christian countries"', creating 'a Talmudic republic'. He insisted that 'the Jews constitute a State within the State', that the Jews 'consider themselves not bound by State laws', the Jewish community has 'as one of its basic aims "the darkening of the mind of Christians" to turn them only into fictional owners of the property that belongs to them'. More broadly, he 'accused the Society for the Spreading of Enlightenment among the Jews and the Universal Jewish Union (the Alliance Israélite) of being a part of "a world-wide Jewish conspiracy"'…

"The State Council, 'softening the decisive phraseology of the *Book of the Kahal*', declared that the external distinguishing of the Jews from the rest of the population could be achieved by administrative measures, this 'will in no way guarantee the annihilation of the self-enclosed and almost anti-Christian feelings of the Jewish communities', but 'the isolation of the Jews which is so harmful for the State' can be 'annihilated, on the one hand, by a weakening, as far as possible, of the social links of the Jews among themselves and of the Jewish elders' abuse of their power, and on the other hand, which is still more important, by the spread of enlightenment among the Jews'."

The phrase "the annihilation of the self-enclosed and almost anti-Christian feelings of the Jewish communities" cut to the root of the matter. The anti-Christian feelings of the Jews, fed by the Talmud, were intense. Moreover, as even the famous English Jew Sir Isaiah Berlin admits, they regarded the Russian peasants as "a species of lower beings".

"I.S. Aksakov, a constant opponent of complete emancipation for the Jews, already at the end of the 50s had tried to restrain the government 'from too bold steps' along this path. When a law was passed giving state service to Jews with degrees, he objected (1862), saying that the Jews were 'a handful of people who completely reject the Christian teaching, the Christian ideal and moral code (and consequently all the bases of the social existence of the

country), and confess a teaching that is contrary and hostile to it'. He was not in favour of equality for the Jews in political rights, although he was completely in favour of their having equality in purely civil rights, so that the Jewish people "should be provided with complete freedom of existence, self-government, development, education and trade… even… that they should be allowed to live throughout Russia'. In 1867 he wrote that economically 'one should not talk about the emancipation of the Jews, but about the emancipation of the Russians from the Jews'. He noted the deaf indifference of the liberal press to the peasants' condition and needs. And now Aksakov explained the way of pogroms in 1881 as the display of popular anger against 'the oppression of the Russian local population by Jewry', which is why during the pogroms there was 'no burglary', only the destruction of property and 'some kind of simple-minded conviction of the rightness of their actions'; and he repeated that the question should be put 'not about the equality in rights of the Jews with the Christians, but about the equality of the Christians with the Jews, and about the removal of the rightlessness of the Russian population before the Jews'…

"The writer D. Mordovtsev, who was sympathetic to the Jews, in his 'Letter of a Christian on the Jewish question', which was published in the Jewish newspaper *Rassvet [Dawn],* pessimistically called on the Jews 'to emigrate to Palestine and America, seeing this as the only solution of the Jewish question in Russia."

Again, in 1879 Constantine Pobedonostev wrote to Dostoyevsky: "They are at the root of the revolutionary socialist movement and of regicide, they own the periodical press, they have in their hands the financial markets; the people as a whole fall into financial slavery to them; they even control the principles of contemporary science and strive to place it outside of Christianity."

And Dostoyevsky himself wrote: "Jewry is thriving precisely there where the people are still ignorant, or not free, or economically backward. It is there that Jewry has a champ libre! And instead of raising, by its influence, the level of education, instead of increasing knowledge, generating economic fitness in the native population, - instead of this, the Jew, wherever he has settled, has still more humiliated and debauched the people; there humaneness was still more debased and the educational level fell still lower; there inescapable, inhuman misery, and with it despair, spread still more disgustingly. Ask the native populations in our border regions: What is propelling the Jew – has been propelling him for centuries? You will receive a unanimous answer: mercilessness. 'He has been prompted so many centuries only by pitilessness for us, only the thirst for our sweat and blood.'

"And, in truth, the whole activity of the Jews in these border regions of

ours consisted of rendering the native population as much as possible inescapably dependent on them, taking advantage of the local laws. They always managed to be on friendly terms with those upon whom the people were dependent, and, certainly, it is not for them to complain, at least in this respect, about their restricted rights compared with the native population. They have received from us enough of these rights over the native population. What, in the course of decades and centuries, has become of the Russian people where the Jews settled is attested by the history of our border regions. What, then? – Point to any other tribe from among Russian aliens which could rival the Jew by his dreadful influence in this connection! You will find no such tribe. In this respect the Jew preserves all his originality as compared with other Russian aliens, and, of course, the reason therefore is that status in statu of his, the spirit of which specifically breathes with pitilessness for everything that is not Jew, with disrespect for any people and tribe, for every human creature that is not a Jew. And what kind of justification is it that in Western Europe the nations did not permit themselves to be overwhelmed, and that thus the Russian people themselves are at fault? Because the Russian people in the border regions of Russia proved weaker than the European nations (and exclusively as a result of their cruel political circumstances), for this sole reason should they be completely crushed by exploitation, instead of being helped?

"And if reference is made to Europe, to France, for example, - there too, hardly has their status in statu been harmless. Of course, there, Christianity and its idea have been lowered and are sinking not because of the Jew's fault, but through their own fault; nevertheless, it is impossible not to note also in Europe the great triumph of Jewry which has replaced many former ideas with its own.

"Oh, it goes without saying that man always, at all times, has been worshipping materialism and has been inclined to perceive and understand liberty only in the sense of making his life secure through money hoarded by the exertion of every effort and accumulated by all possible means. However, at no time in the past have these tendencies been raised so cynically and so obviously to the level of a sublime principle as in our Nineteenth Century. 'Everybody for himself and only for himself, and every intercourse with man solely for one's self' – such is the ethical tenet of the majority of present-day people, even not bad people, but, on the contrary, laboring people who neither murder nor steal. And mercilessness for the lower classes, the decline of brotherhood, exploitation of the poor by the rich, - oh, of course, all this existed also before and always; however, it had not been raised to the level of supreme truth and of science – it had been condemned by Christianity, whereas at present, on the contrary, it is being regarded as virtue.

"Thus, it is not for nothing that over there the Jews are reigning everywhere over stock-exchanges; it is not for nothing that they control capital, that they are the masters of credit, and it is not for nothing – I repeat – that they are also the masters of international politics, and what is going to happen in the future is known to the Jews themselves: their reign, their complete reign, is approaching! We are approaching the complete triumph of ideas before which sentiments of humanity, thirst for truth, Christian and national feelings, and even those of national dignity, must bow. On the contrary, we are approaching materialism, a blind, carnivorous craving for personal material welfare, a craving for personal accumulation of money by any means – that is all that has been proclaimed as the supreme aim, as the reasonable thing, as liberty, in lieu of the Christian idea of salvation only through the closest moral and brotherly fellowship of men.

"People will laugh and say that this is not all brought about by the Jews. Of course, not only by them, but if the Jews have completely triumphed and thriven in Europe precisely at the time when these new principles have triumphed there to the point of having been raised to the level of a moral principle, it is impossible not to infer that the Jews, too, have contributed their influence to this condition… The summit of the Jews is assuming stronger and firmer power over mankind seeking to convey to it its image and substance. Jews keep vociferating that among them, too, there are good people. Oh, God! Is this the point? – Besides, we are speaking not about good or bad people. And aren't there good people among those? Wasn't the late James Rothschild of Paris a good man? – We are speaking about the whole and its idea; we are speaking about Judaism and the Jewish idea which is clasping the whole world instead of Christianity which 'did not succeed'…"

Of course, the views of Dostoyevsky, Aksakov and other Russian "antisemites" are profoundly unfashionable today. Most critiques of Russian anti-Semitism simply ignore the facts about the Jews in Russia cited above. However, a more intelligent and interesting critique has been presented by Sir Geoffrey Hosking, who takes up the hint given here by Dostoyevsky that the Jewish idea took the place of Christianity, "which 'did not succeed'".

According to Hosking, "Anti-Semitism was a kind of frustrated Slavophilism, conceived in awareness of the ways in which Russians had failed to fulfil their potential nationhood. In the interests of great-power status, the Russians had spurned their myth of the chosen people and the empire of truth and justice. The Jews, by contrast, continued to believe that they were a chosen people and to hold to their messianic prophecies. Where Slavophiles dreamed of a peasant commune based on Orthodox principles, the Jews seemed still to have successful communities ruled over by their religious leaders. They had succeeded where the Russians had failed: in

making a messianic religion the essence of their national identity."

We may concede a degree of psychological truth in this analysis: the Russians *were* failing "to fulfil their potential nationhood", if that nationhood was perceived as being the mission of the Third Rome, that is, of being the bearer of "light from the East", the universal truth of Orthodox Christianity, to the benighted nations of Europe and Asia. Far from converting the Europeans to Orthodoxy, the Russians were being converted in large numbers to various westernizing ideologies. Nor, in spite of flourishing missions in Alaska and (a little later) Japan, were they much more successful in Asia, where the very earthly motivations of great-power politics, little different from those of their great rivals, the British, prevailed.

Now a sense of failure can be treated in two ways: in the Orthodox way, by repentance and the confession of sin, and in the fallen way, by exaggerated self-assertion and the blaming of others. Slavophilism at its best, as we find it in Khomiakov and Kireyevsky, or, somewhat later, in Dostoyevsky and Tiutchev, implicitly contained a message of repentance: that Russia was falling away from her vocation as God's people, and she should return to the traditions of the pre-Petrine, Muscovite period, when she had been more faithful to her heavenly calling. But in some of its later varieties, as we shall see in more detail later, Slavophilism degenerated into mere nationalist self-assertion. Russia, it was maintained, was great not only, or even primarily, because she was the bearer of the one truth to all nations (messianism), but also in a purely secular, material sense, or as embodying the last and greatest in the historical series of world civilizations (Danilevsky)…

The Jews were unique among Russia's national rivals in being no threat to her (yet) in purely political terms, but a direct threat in terms of messianic mission. For the Jews, like the Russians, claimed to be the nation *that knows the truth*, the bearer of God's saving message to the world. But the Jewish God was definitely not the Russian God – not Jesus Christ. And Judaism was aimed at protecting the Jews against the influence of this Russian God, Who happened to be a Jew by race, but Whom the Jews had crucified and continued to anathematize. So in religious terms there could be no compromise, no living together in amity between these two most religious of peoples. It was a matter of kto kogo?, to use Lenin's phrase: who would rule whom? – and the constant strife between Jews and Russians in the Western Borderlands was therefore both wholly predictable and essentially unavoidable. Moreover, as Hosking rightly points out, the relative success of the Jews in maintaining their religious identity was an implicit rebuke to the Russians, who were losing theirs. In fact, it was hardly a coincidence that the appearance of the Jews in large numbers in the Russian lands towards the end of the eighteenth century had coincided almost exactly with the nadir of

Russian religious consciousness in the reign of Catherine II. It was as if God had introduced the Jews into Russia to remind the Russians: "Just as the Jews fell away from Me when they chose national self-assertion instead of Me, so you can fall away if you pursue great-power wealth and status at the expense of faithfulness to My commandments. And just as they fell from being My People to being My fiercest enemies, so it can happen to you…"

16. DOSTOYEVSKY ON PAPISM AND SOCIALISM

The simultaneous defeat in 1870-71 of both the most reactionary and the most revolutionary regimes in Europe (the Papacy and the Paris Commune) raised the question: might there be a connection between these seeming opposites? Following the suggestion of some French socialist thinkers, Dostoyevsky saw a link between the two antichristian systems. "Present-day French Socialism," he wrote, "is nothing but the truest and most direct continuation of the Catholic idea, its fullest, most final consequence which has been evolved through centuries… French Socialism is nothing else than the compulsory union of mankind – an idea which dates back to ancient Rome and which was fully expressed in Catholicism."

Papism, according to Dostoyevsky, was the beginning of western atheism. As Prince Myshkin says in *The Idiot* (1868): "Roman Catholicism believes that the Church cannot exist on earth without universal temporal power, and cries: Non possumus! In my opinion, Roman Catholicism isn't even a religion, but most decidedly a continuation of the Holy Roman Empire, and everything in it is subordinated to that idea, beginning with faith. The Pope seized the earth, an earthly throne and took up the sword; and since then everything has gone on in the same way, except that they've added lies, fraud, deceit, fanaticism, superstition wickedness. They have trifled with the most sacred, truthful, innocent, ardent feelings of the people, have bartered it all for money, for base temporal power. And isn't this the teaching of Antichrist? Isn't it clear from Roman Catholicism itself! Atheism originated first of all with them: how could they believe in themselves? It gained ground because of abhorrence of them; it is the child of their lies and their spiritual impotence! Atheism! In our country it is only the upper classes who do not believe, as Mr. Radomsky so splendidly put it the other day, for they have lost their roots. But in Europe vast numbers of the common people are beginning to lose their faith – at first from darkness and lies, and now from fanaticism, hatred of the Church and Christianity!"

And since Socialism is "above all an atheistic question, the question of the modern integration of atheism", Papism is its parent, too: "Socialism, too, is the child of Catholicism and the intrinsic Catholic nature! It, too, like its brother atheism, was begotten of despair, in opposition to Catholicism as a

moral force, in order to replace the lost moral power of religion, to quench the spiritual thirst of parched humanity, and save it not by Christ, but also by violence! This, too, is freedom by violence. This, too, is union through the sword and blood. 'Don't dare to believe in God! Don't dare to have property! Don't dare to have a personality of your own! Fraternité ou la mort! Two million heads!'"

So akin is Socialism to Papism that Papism "will tell the people that Christ also preached everything that the Socialists are preaching to them. Again it will pervert and sell them Christ as it has sold Him so many times in the past."

Peter Verkhovensky in *The Devils* (1871) even envisages the possibility of the Pope becoming the leader of the Socialists: "Do you know, I was thinking of delivering the world up to the Pope. Let him go barefoot and show himself to the mob, saying, 'See what they have brought me to!' and they will all follow him, even the army. The Pope on top, we all round him, and below us – the Shigalev order. All we need is that the Internationale should come to an agreement with the Pope; this will come about. The old boy will agree at once. He can't do anything else. Mark my words…"

"The Western Church," wrote Dostoyevsky, "has distorted the image of Christ, having been transformed from a Church into a Roman state and incarnated it again in the form of the papacy. Yes, in the West there is in truth no longer Christianity and the Church, although there are still many Christians – yes, and they will never disappear. Catholicism is truly no longer Christianity, and is passing into idol-worship, while Protestantism with giant steps is passing into atheism and a slippery, shifting, inconstant (and not age-old) teaching on morality. The Empire accepted Christianity, and the Church – the Roman law and state. A small part of the Church departed into the desert and began to continue its former work: Christian communities appeared again, then monasteries…. But then the remaining, huge part of the Church divided, as we know, into two halves. In the western half the state finally overcame the Church completely. The Church was annihilated and was reincarnated finally into a state. There appeared the papacy – a continuation of the ancient Roman Empire in a new incarnation."

Dostoyevsky saw in Germany's victory over France at Sedan in 1871 an attempt to crush Socialism, and thereby Papism, and foresaw the time when the madness of Papist individualism would seek to unite itself with the madness of socialist collectivism: "By depriving France of her political existence, Prince Bismarck hopes to deliver a blow at socialism. Socialism, as a heritage of Catholicism, and France are most hateful to a genuine German. It is excusable that Germany's representatives believe that it is so easy to master

socialism by merely destroying Catholicism – as its source and beginning.

"However, this is what is most probably going to happen should France fall politically [which it did not]: Catholicism will lose its sword, and for the first time will appeal to the people whom it has been despising for so many centuries, ingratiating itself with worldly kings and emperors. Now, however, it will appeal to the people, since there is nowhere else to go; specifically, it will appeal to the leaders of the most worldly and rebellious element of the people – the socialists. Catholicism will tell the people that Christ also preached everything the socialists are preaching to them. Once more it will pervert and sell them Christ as it has Him so many times in the past for earthly possessions, defending the rights of the Inquisition which, in the name of loving Christ, tortured men for freedom of conscience – in the name of Christ to Whom only that disciple was dear who came to Him of his free accord and not the one who had been bought or frightened.

"Catholicism sold Christ when it blessed the Jesuits and sanctioned the righteousness of 'every means for Christ's cause'. However, since time immemorial, it has converted Christ's cause into a mere concern for its earthly possessions and its future political domination over the whole world. When Catholic mankind turned away from the monstrous image in which, at length, Christ had been revealed to them, - after many protests, reformations, etc., at the beginning of this century – endeavours arose to organize life without God, without Christ. Devoid of the instinct of a bee or an ant, unmistakably and with utmost precision constructing their hive and ant-hill, men sought to create something on the order of an unmistakable ant-hill. They rejected the unique formula of mankind's salvation, derived from God and announced through revelation to man: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself', and substituted for it practical inferences, such as 'Chacun pour soi et Dieu pour tous' ('Each one for himself and God for all'), or scientific axioms, such as 'the struggle for existence'.

"Bereft of the instinct which guides animals and enables them to organize their life faultlessly, men haughtily sought to rely upon science, forgetting that for such a task as the creation of society, science is still, so to speak, in swaddles. Dreams ensued. The future tower of Babylon became the ideal but also the dread of humanity. But after these dreams there soon appeared other simple doctrines, intelligible to everybody, for instance: 'to rob the rich, to stain the world with blood, after which *somehow everything will again be settled of its own accord.*'

"Finally, even these teachers were outstripped: there appeared the doctrine of anarchy, after which – if it could be put into effect – there would again ensue a period of cannibalism, and people would be compelled to start all

over again as they started some ten thousand years ago. Catholicism fully understands all this, and it will manage to seduce the leaders of the underground war. It will say to them: 'You have no centre, no order in the conduct of the work; you are a force scattered all over the world, and now, after the downfall of France [Dostoyevsky is referring to the fall of the Commune in 1871] – also an oppressed force. I shall be your rallying center, and I shall attract to you all those who still believe in me.

"One way or another, the alliance will be formed. Catholicism does not wish to die, whereas social revolution and the new social period in Europe are indubitable: two forces, unquestionably, will have to come to understanding, to unite. It stands to reason that slaughter, blood, plunder, even cannibalism would be advantageous to Catholicism. Precisely then it may hope to catch once more its fish in troubled waters, foreseeing the moment when, finally, mankind, exhausted by chaos and lawlessness, will fall into its arms. Then, once more, it will become in reality the sole and absolute 'earthly ruler and universal authority', sharing its power with no one. Thereby it will attain its ultimate goal."

Although not an exact prophecy, this accurately identified the general trend in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. For there has been an increasing tendency for the papacy, if not to identify with the revolution (although its "liberation theologians" did precisely that in Central and South America in the 1980s), at any rate to accept many of their premises and strive to work with them rather than against them. Thus the papacy has fitted easily into the modern socialist structure of the European Union and the present pope, Francis I, is noted for his leftist leanings…

In *The Brothers Karamazov* (1881), Dostoyevsky underlined the link between Papism and Socialism by making the leading proponent of Socialism a Papist Inquisitor. After his disillusionment with Papism, Western man could not be satisfied with the atomic individualism of the societies that replaced it, but yearned for the brotherhood of all men in obedience to one Father that Papism provided, albeit in a perverted form. "For the chief concern of these miserable creatures," says the Inquisitor, "is not only to find something that I or someone else can worship, but to find something that all believe in and worship, and the absolutely essential thing is that they should do so *all together*. It is this need for *universal* worship that is the chief torment of every man individually and of mankind as a whole from the beginning of time. For the sake of the universal worship they have put each other to the sword…"

17. THE DEMONS

"The revolution," wrote the philosopher Ivan Ilyin, "is a spiritual, and perhaps also a directly psychological illness. The revolution is the unleashing of atheist, unnatural, destructive and base passions. It is born from the mistakes of the ruling power, and from the vanity and envy of its subjects. It begins with violation of the law and ends with demoralization and death."

Although the Russian revolution was caused in the first place, of course, by the Russians, it is impossible to ignore the massive contribution made by the Jews…

In spite of Alexander II's reforms Russia remained (with Romania) one of only two countries in Europe that refused to give full rights to the Jews – for reasons, as we have seen, that were fully comprehensible. If poor peasants were to be protected from merciless exploitation by the Jews, - indeed, if the poorer Jews themselves were to be protected from the dictatorial control of the kahal, - then some restrictions had to be placed on the latter. The basis for these restrictions in Russia was not racial, but religious: only Talmudic Jews, those who accepted the blood-curdling hatred of the Talmud, suffered restrictions. Other categories of Jews – for example, the Karaites, who rejected the Talmud – were free of all restrictions. Even for the Talmudists, the restrictions were very loosely applied, and did not prevent many Jews from getting a good education in Russian universities and enriching themselves.

However, the simple fact that the Russian State did not submit completely to the contemporary fashion for giving the Jews everything they asked for meant that it was enemy number one for the Jewish leadership. Moreover, as Mikhail Nazarov writes, there were other powerful reasons for the Jews to hate Russia: "Already Suvorov's campaign in Europe against the armies of revolutionary France in 1799 ('God save the kings!' said Paul I to the commander as he left), the victory of Russia over the 'usurper' Napoleon and the creation of the monarchist Sacred Union in 1815, the crushing of the bourgeois-democratic rebellion in Poland in 1831, the interference into the European bourgeois revolution of 1848-1849, when the Russian army gave help to the Austrian monarchy in Hungary – had demonstrated before the eyes of the powers behind the scenes that Russia was the withholding power of the old Christian world-order in Europe (in the sense of the Apostle Paul's words, cf. II Thessalonians 2.7)…"

However, the power and independence of the Russian State meant that the methods of gradual Jewish infiltration and control of the financial levers of power that had proved so successful in Western Europe would be insufficient to overthrow Russia - there were no Rothschilds, and certainly no Disraelis in

Russia! Revolution from above was impossible; so it had to be revolution from below. But this revolution did not have to be carried out by Jews or with the aim of establishing a Jewish kingdom. It could be carried out by Gentiles for intrinsically Gentile ideals, such as "Freedom, Equality and Fraternity". The important thing was that it should succeed in destroying the Russian State. It would then be up to the secret Jewish leaders living abroad to turn the destruction to their advantage, to the building of a Jewish kingdom…

This strategy of revolution from below was offered in two forms: the anarchist revolution favoured by the Russian nobleman Michael Bakunin, and the socialist revolution favoured by Marx and Engels.

Marxism's main aims, as declared in *The Communist Manifesto* of 1848, were the destruction of private property, the destruction of the family and the destruction of religion as a prelude to the triumph of the proletariat and the coming of communism. However, the revolution of 1848 had been a failure from the socialist point of view. And after that failure a mild conservative reaction set in throughout Europe as some of the wealth generated by a period of rapid growth in the world economy trickled down to the workers and dulled their zeal for revolution. But as their numbers increased in direct proportion to the increase in factory production, so did their power. And it would only take another downturn in the economy to bring them out on the streets…

In 1864 Marx founded the International Working Men's Association in London. In his Inaugural Address he showed how the industrial revolution had impoverished the English working class, and declared: "In all countries of Europe it has now become a truth demonstrable to every unprejudiced mind, and only denied by those whose interest is to hedge other people in a fool's paradise, that no improvement of machinery, no appliance of science to production, no contrivances of communication, no new colonies, no emigration, no opening of markets, no free trade, nor all these things put together, will do away with the miseries of the industrious masses."

Marx continued to control this, the First Internationale, until its Congress in Basle in 1869, when the delegates were captivated by Michael Bakunin. Bakunin, writes Sir Isaiah Berlin, "was a born agitator with sufficient scepticism in his system not to be taken in himself by his own torrential eloquence. To dominate individuals and sway assemblies was his *metier*: he belonged to that odd, fortunately not very numerous, class of persons who contrive to hypnotise others into throwing themselves into causes – if need be killing and dying for them – while themselves remaining coldly, clearly and ironically aware of the effect of the spells which they cast. When his bluff was called, as occasionally it was, for example, by Herzen, Bakunin would laugh

with the greatest good nature, admit everything freely, and continue to cause havoc, if anything with greater unconcern than before. His path was strewn with victims, casualties, and faithful, idealistic converts; he himself remained a gay, easy-going, mendacious, irresistibly agreeable, calmly and coldly destructive, fascinating, generous, undisciplined, eccentric Russian landowner to the end…"

The basic difference between Marx and Bakunin was in their attitude to the State. While Marx called for the overthrow of the old regimes, he was not against the State as such, at any rate before the advent of the communist paradise, and believed that the State could be used to free the workers. And the importance of the State in his thinking, combined with a more "scientific" and collectivist approach, became more pronounced with time. "It meant," as M.S. Anderson writes, "a fundamental change of emphasis in his thinking. The fulfilment and true freedom of the individual still remained the objective of revolution and the end of the historical process. As far as the making of revolutions was concerned, however, his 'alienation' and his revolutionary consciousness, so important in the early works of the 1840s and still important in those of the 1850s, were now threatened with submersion in a vast and impersonal process of social evolution governed by laws analogous to those of the physical world and quite impossible to divert or restrain."

Bakunin, however, believed that the State was simply another form of oppression and had to be destroyed. "I am not a Communist," he said, "because Communism, by concentrating all property in the State, necessarily leads to the concentration of all the power of society in the State. I want to abolish the State…" Like the French philosopher-anarchist Proudhon, Bakunin believed that all property was theft, and that included State property. Like Proudhon again, he believed that States would be replaced by local workers' organizations.

Bakunin's most famous remark was: "The desire to destroy is also a creative desire." "The whole of Europe," he said, "with St. Petersburg, Paris and London, will be transformed into an enormous rubbish-heap." "The miracles of the revolution," he said, "will come out of the depths of this fiery ocean. Russia is the aim of the revolution, its greatest forces will be unleashed there, and there it will attain its perfection." "The constellation of the revolution will rise high and beautiful in Moscow out of the sea of blood and will become the guiding star for the good of the whole of liberated humanity…"

In 1883 Engels criticised Bakunin's anarchism, writing: "The anarchists have put the thing upside down. They declare that the proletarian revolution must *begin* by doing away with the political organisation of the state… But to

destroy it at such a moment would be to destroy the only organism by means of which the victorious proletariat can assert its newly-conquered power, hold down its capitalist adversaries and carry out that economic revolution of society without which the whole victory must end in a new defeat and in a mass slaughter of the workers similar to those after the Paris Commune."

True; and yet "Bakuninist" anarchism corresponded more closely to the spirit of the revolution than all the treatises of Marx, whose only purpose was to give a pseudo-scientific justification to an essentially destructive, satanic force. Thus the victory of Bakunin over Marx at the meeting of the First Internationale in Basle was no accident – the delegates recognised in Bakunin the true incarnation of the spirit of the revolution. As Baron Wrangel said of his speech: "I no longer remember what Bakunin said, and it would in any case scarcely be possible to reproduce it. His speech had neither logical sequence nor richness in ideas, but consisted of thrilling phrases and rousing appeals. It was something elemental and incandescent – a raging storm with lightning flashes and thunderclaps, and a roaring as of lions. The man was a born speaker, made for the revolution. The revolution was his natural being. His speech made a tremendous impression. If he had asked his hearers to cut each other's throats, they would have cheerfully obeyed him."

One of those present at Bakunin's speech was Dostoyevsky. He said that the whole speech had been given "without the slightest proof, all this was learned by rote twenty years ago and has not changed one bit. Fire and sword! And when all has been destroyed, then, in their opinion, there will be peace…" Dostoyevsky had no time for Bakunin's atheist slogans: "As long as God exists, man is a slave" and: "Man is rational, just, free, therefore there is no God." Already in *Notes from the Underground* (1864) Dostoyevsky had demonstrated that man in his fallen state was quite *irrational*, and would never be happy with rationalist schemes for his happiness. "I would not be at all surprised, for instance, if suddenly and without the slightest possible reason a gentleman of ignoble or rather reactionary and sardonic countenance were to arise amid all that coming reign of universal common sense and, gripping his sides firmly with his hands, were to say to us all. 'Well, gentlemen, what about giving all this common sense a great kick and letting it shiver in the dust before our feet simply to send all these logarithms to the devil so that we again live according to our silly will?"

And yet Bakunin's anarchism was not just thunder and lightning. For him "the withering away of the State" was not, as in Marx and Engels, an essentially utopian idea that was secondary to the central idea of class struggle: for him, it was the heart of the matter. Being a more consistent libertarian than any of the Marxists, he perceived that even the socialist State would be an instrument of oppression. In fact, he warned that the "red

bureaucracy" would be "the vilest and most dangerous lie of the century". And in 1870 he accurately predicted what actually took place in 1917: "Take the most radical of revolutionaries and place him on the throne of all the Russias or give him dictatorial powers… and before the year is out he will be worse than the Tsar himself…"

Bakunin's vision of socialism looked more likely than Marx's to triumph in the years 1869-1871, between the Basle Congress and the Paris Commune. However, Marx defeated Bakunin by claiming that the Paris Commune was the beginning of the new proletarian (as opposed to bourgeois) revolution, which would spread from France to Germany to all Europe. It did spread, but not in the way he predicted: its first success was in peasant Russia, not proletarian Germany – as Bakunin, not Marx, had predicted. For Bakunin was able to foresee, as Berlin wrote, "that [revolutions] were liable to develop not in the most industrialised societies, on a rising curve of economic progress, but in countries in which the majority of the population was near subsistence level and had least to lose by an upheaval – primitive peasants in conditions of desperate poverty in backward rural economies where capitalism was weakest, such as Spain and Russia."

In fact, the peasants of Russia were not as poor, comparatively speaking, as is often thought… However, Marx and Engels had this in common with Bakunin: they saw clearly that the enemy that had to be destroyed if the revolution was to succeed was Russia. As Engels said: "Not one revolution in Europe and in the whole world can attain final victory while the present Russian state exists…"

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In about 1870, writes Richard Pipes, "radical youths became increasingly interested in the newly emancipated peasant. The leading theoretical lights of this period, Michael Bakunin and Peter Lavrov, called on young people to abandon universities and go to the village. Bakunin wished them to carry the message of immediate rebellion. He believed that the muzhik [peasant] was a born anarchist, and only a spark was needed to set the countryside on fire. That spark was to be carried by the intelligentsia in the form of revolutionary 'agitation'. Lavrov adopted a more gradual approach. Before he would turn into a revolutionary, the Russian peasant needed exposure to 'propaganda' which would enlighten him about the injustices of the Emancipation Edict, about the causes of his economic predicament, and about the collusion between the propertied classes, the state and the church. Inspired by these ideas, in the spring of 1874 several thousand youths quit school and went 'to the people'. Here disappointment awaited them. The muzhik, known to them largely from literary descriptions and polemical tracts, would have nothing to

do with idealistic students come to save him. Suspecting ulterior motives… he either ignored them or turned them over to the rural constabulary. But even more disappointing than the peasants' hostility, which could be explained away by his ignorance, were his ethics. Some radical youths scorned property because they came from propertied backgrounds: they associated concern for wealth with their parents, whom they rejected. Hence they idealized the rural commune and the artel. The muzhik, living from hand to mouth, looked at the matter quite differently. He desperately wanted to acquire property… The intellectuals could indulge in talk of selfless brotherhood because, being supported by their families or the government (by means of stipends), they were not required to compete with one another. The muzhik, however, was always competing for scarce resources…

"In response to these disappointments, the radical movement broke up into warring factions. One group, called narodniki from their unbounded faith in the narod or people, decided that it was improper for intellectuals to foist their ideas upon the masses. The toiling man was always right. Intellectuals should settle in the village and learn from the peasant instead of trying to teach him. Another group, convinced that this method would end in renunciation of revolution, began to veer towards terrorism. A third developed an interest in western Social Democracy and, having concluded that no social revolution in Russia was possible until capitalism had done its work, braced themselves for a long and patient wait."

The "going to the people" movement had petered out by 1875. It was replaced, on the one hand, by Socialist Revolutionary movements such as *Land and Liberty* and *The People's Will,* and on the other by the Marxist Social Democratic movement. Both movements wanted revolution; but since the Marxists, led by George Plekhanov, did not believe that the revolution could come to Russia before it had become an industrial country, and that it was the workers, not the peasants, who would spearhead it, attention focussed on the Socialist Revolutionary terrorists who wanted apocalypse *now*.

The first "pure" terrorist was Bakunin. But he lived abroad. More typical of the young devils who came to dominate the revolutionary underground inside Russia was Nicholas Ishutin.

Ronald Seth writes: "He was the son of a merchant and of a mother who came of a noble family. When he was two both his parents died, and he was brought up until he was eleven by relatives of his father. In 1863 he entered Moscow university, where he quickly gathered round him a group of young men upon whom he was soon exerting a quite extraordinary influence.

"Ishutin was not an intellectual, and though his scorn of learning might

have been a pose, he had not been long at the university when he decided to give up his studies in order to devote all his time to The Cause. Many of his followers imitated their leader in this.

"The group quickly became strong and active, and determined, as they phrased it, 'to go to the people', they sacrificed not only careers but all personal belongings. As a practical step in making contact with the people they set up co-operative and friendly societies for the workmen, artisans and students."

However, this romantic Populist phase did not last long. For in fact "all Ishutin's efforts and multifarious schemes were directed to one sole end – the creation of a revolutionary force. To achieve this he tossed all scruples out of the window, and introduced a new approach to the means by which the end might be attained – naked terrorism.

"The group believed that a peasant revolution would take place within five years. Their conception of this revolution differed from any previous conception of popular revolt; it was to be radical and 'economic' and nothing must be allowed to prevent its happening.

"The ruthless extremist policy preached by Ishutin did not appeal to all the members of the group, and as a result, between 1865 and 1866, there came into being a smaller group-within-the-group who were prepared to transmute into activity the extreme ideas of their leader. Named by Ishutin *The Organization*, this smaller group consisted mostly of extremely poor young men, many of whom were the sons of country priests whose modus vivendi differed little from that of the peasants. A few came from peasant families.

"Even this small and select band, however, did not entirely respond to all the aims of its founder. Extremist propaganda and agitation, yes – but not out and out terrorism, and this last was dear to Ishutin's heart. So within *The Organization* there also developed another group, a secret cell, even more select, composed of students who lived together 'in common'. They gave themselves the name *Hell*…

"The existence of *Hell* was to be kept secret even from the members of The Organisation…"

It was an appropriate name for a truly demonic organization, whose layers within layers recall Weishaupt's *Illuminati* in the French revolution. However, it was not Ishutin's *Hell* that was destined to create the spark of revolution. After another member of the organization, Demetrius Karakozov, made a failed attempt to assassinate the Tsar, he and Ishutin were tried and sentenced

to death. Karakozov was hanged, but Ishutin's sentence was commuted to hard labour in Siberia. There he died of tuberculosis, having spent the last eleven years of his life insane…

The next terrorist leader was Sergius Nechayev, a teacher of Holy Scripture who from his student years devoted himself to political activity. (The combination of seminary training and revolutionary activity was not uncommon. Dobroliubov was the son of a priest. Stalin was a seminarian…)

In 1869 Nechayev went on a false passport to Geneva, where he joined Bakunin and Ogarev, a friend of Herzen's. Like Bakunin, he was an anarchist: "We are destroyers," he declared, "others will create".

Together with Bakunin Nechayev wrote *The Revolutionary's Catechism*, which declared: "1. The revolutionary is a doomed person. He has neither his own interests, nor affairs, nor feelings, nor attractions, nor even name. Everything in him is swallowed up by a single exclusive interest, a single thought, a single passion – the revolution.

"2. In the depth of his essence he has broken – not in words only, but also in fact – every bond linking him with the civil order and with the whole civilized world, with all the laws, decencies, social conditions and morality of this world. He is its pitiless enemy, and if he were to continue to live in it, then it would only be in order to destroy it more reliably.

"3. The revolutionary despises all doctrinaire attitudes and has rejected secular science, presenting everything to future generations. He knows only one science – the science of destruction. For this and only for this has he studied mechanics, physics, chemistry and, perhaps, medicine.

"4. He despises and hates contemporary social morality in all its manifestations. Morality for him is that which aids the triumph of the revolution. Immorality and crime is everything that hinders it…

"7. The nature of the genuine revolutionary excludes all romanticism, all sensitivity, exaltation or amusement. It excludes even personal hatred and revenge. Revolutionary passion, having become in him an everyday, every-minute phenomenon, must be united with cold calculation…

"25. In coming closer to the people, we must first of all be united those elements of the people's life which since the time of the foundation of the Muscovite State power have not ceased to protest, not in words, but in deeds, against everything that is directly or indirectly linked with the State: against the nobles, against the officials, against the popes, against the world of Guilds

and against the rich peasant, the devourer of the mir. We shall unite with the savage world of the thieves, this true and only revolutionary in Russia…"

In Nechayev's plan for the revolution, various public figures were to be shot, but Alexander II himself was not to be killed, but would be publicly tortured and executed "*before the face of the whole of the liberated plebs, on the ruins of the State*".

After the great work of destruction, according to Nechayev, all power would necessarily be concentrated in the hands of a Central Committee. (In this centralism, he differed from the more democratic Bakunin.) Everybody was to undertake physical work. Dissidents were to be executed…

In August, 1869, Nechayev returned to Russia as the self-styled representative of the World Revolutionary Movement at Geneva and organized a 'Society of National Retribution' in Moscow. On 21 November he and four members of the Moscow 'group of five' murdered the fifth member of the group, a young student of the Moscow Agricultural College called Ivanov, for allegedly refusing to carry out the instructions of the Geneva committee. Ivanov was strangled, then shot, and his body was weighted with stones and thrown into the pond.

Dostoyevsky's great novel *The Demons* (1871) was clearly inspired by Nechayev and his group of five. But it is much more than a study of the psychology and demonism of the revolutionary. It attempts, successfully, to show how even decent, humane people can be drawn into the revolutionary morass.

"In my novel *The Demons*," wrote Dostoevsky, "I attempted to attempted to express those various and diverse motives by which even the purest of heart and the most guileless people can be drawn to commit the most monstrous villainy. Therein is the horror, that here one can do the most infamous and abhorrent deed, sometimes completely not being a scoundrel! And that's not among us only, but across the whole world it is so, always and from the beginning of the ages, during times of transition, in times of dislocation in people's lives, of doubts and negation, skepticism and unsteadiness in basic social convictions. But we have it more than it's possible anywhere, and namely in our time, and this feature is the most painful and sad feature of our present time. In the possibility of seeing oneself, and even sometimes almost, as a matter of fact, as not a scoundrel, while working clear and inarguable abomination – herein is our contemporary tragedy!"

"Dostoyevsky's description of Shatov's murder [in *The Demons*] follows closely the description of Ivanov's murder. After the murder, Nechayev, like

Peter Verkhovensky in the novel, escaped first to Petersburg and then abroad. He went back to Geneva, where he rejoined Bakunin and Ogaryov and assisted them in their abortive attempt to revive Herzen's London journal *The Bell*. His ruthlessness in carrying out Bakunin's own principle that the end justifies the means appalled even Bakunin, who soon broke with him. Nechayev then went to London, where he began publishing his terrorist journal *Village Commune*, which was sharply condemned by Engels…

"He later returned to Switzerland, where he was arrested by the Swiss police on an extradition order as a criminal and not a political offender and handed over to the Russian police. On 8 January 1873 he was tried for murder by the Moscow District Court and sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude. He was not sent to Siberia, however, but incarcerated in the Peter and Paul fortress in Petersburg, where he died one year and ten months after Dostoyevsky, in November 1882."

"Atheist anarchism," wrote Dostoyevsky, "is near – our children will see it. The Internationale has decreed that the European revolution should begin in Russia, and it will begin, for there is no reliable buttress against it with us, neither in the administration nor in society. The revolt will begin with atheism and the robbing of all wealth. They will begin to pull down religion, destroy the churches and turn them into barracks and stalls. They will drown the world in blood and then they themselves will get frightened…"

18. PORTENTS OF THE ANTICHRIST

Indifferentism was a spiritual disease afflicting the educated classes of Russia; we would now call it *ecumenism,* that is, an increased tolerance for Christian heresies to the extent of placing them on a par with Orthodoxy. This danger was especially noted by St. Ignaty Brianchaninov (+1867): "You say, 'heretics are Christians just the same.' Where did you take that from? Perhaps someone or other calling himself a Christian while knowing nothing of Christ, may in his extreme ignorance decide to acknowledge himself as the same kind of Christian as heretics, and fail to distinguish the holy Christian faith from those offspring of the curse, blasphemous heresies. Quite otherwise, however, do true Christians reason about this. A whole multitude of saints has received a martyr's crown, has preferred the most cruel and prolonged tortures, prison, exile, rather than agree to take part with heretics in their blasphemous teaching.

"The Ecumenical Church has always recognised heresy as a mortal sin; she has always recognised that the man infected with the terrible malady of heresy is spiritually dead, a stranger to grace and salvation, in communion with the devil and the devil's damnation. Heresy is a sin of the mind; it is more a diabolic than a human sin. It is the devil's offspring, his invention; it is an impiety that is near idol-worship. Every heresy contains in itself blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, whether against the dogma or the action of the Holy Spirit…"

St. Ignaty was pessimistic about the future of Russia: "The people is being corrupted, and the monasteries are also being corrupted." "It is evident that the apostasy from the Orthodox faith is general among the people. One is an open atheist, another is a deist, another a Protestant, another an indifferentist, another a schismatic. There is no healing or cure for this plague." "What has been foretold in the Scriptures is being fulfilled: a cooling towards the faith has engulfed both our people and all the countries in which Orthodoxy was maintained up to now." "Religion is falling in the people in general. Nihilism is penetrating into the merchant class, from where it has not far to go to the peasants. In most peasants a decisive indifference to the Church has appeared, and a terrible moral disorder."

Visions from above seemed to confirm that apocalyptic times were approaching. Thus in 1871 the Over-Procurator of the Russian Holy Synod, Count Alexander Petrovich Tolstoy, had the following vision: "It was as if I were in my own house standing in the entrance-hall. Beyond was a room in which on the ledge between the windows there was a large icon of the God of Sabaoth that gave out such blinding light that from the other room (the

entrance-hall) it was impossible to look at it. Still further in was a room in which there were Protopriest Matthew Alexandrovich Konstantinovsky and the reposed Metropolitan Philaret. And this room was full of books; along the walls from ceiling to floor there were books; on the long tables there were piles of books; and while I certainly had to go into this room, I was held back by fear, and in terror, covering my face with my hand, I passed through the first room and, on entering the next room, I saw Protopriest Matthew Alexandrovich dressed in a simple black cassock; on his head was a skull-cap; in his hands was an unbent book, and he motioned me with his head to find a similar book and open it. At the same time the metropolitan, turning the pages of this book said: 'Rome, Troy, Egypt, Russia, the Bible.' I saw that in my book 'Bible' was written in very heavy lettering. Suddenly there was a noise and I woke up in great fear. I thought a lot about what it could all mean. My dream seemed terrible to me - it would have been better to have seen nothing. Could I not ask those experienced in the spiritual life concerning the meaning of this vision in sleep? But an inner voice explained the dream even to me myself. However, the explanation was so terrible that I did not want to agree with it."

St. Ambrose of Optina gave the following interpretation of this vision: "He who was shown this remarkable vision in sleep, and who then heard the very significant words, very probably received the explanation of what he had seen and heard through his guardian angel, since he himself recognized that an inner voice explained the meaning of the dream to him. However, since we have been asked, we also shall give our opinion...

"...The words 'Rome, Troy, Egypt' may have the following signification. Rome at the time of the Nativity of Christ was the capital of the world, and, from the beginning of the patriarchate, had the primacy of honour; but because of love of power and deviation from the truth she was later rejected and humiliated. Ancient Troy and Egypt were notable for the fact that they were punished for their pride and impiety - the first by destruction, and the second by various punishments and the drowning of Pharaoh with his army in the Red Sea. But in Christian times, in the countries where Troy was located there were founded the Christian patriarchates of Antioch and Constantinople, which flourished for a long time, embellishing the Orthodox Church with their piety and right dogmas; but later, according to the inscrutable destinies of God, they were conquered by barbarians - the Muslims, and up to now have borne this heavy slavery, which restricts the freedom of Christian piety and right belief. And in Egypt, together with the ancient impiety, there was from the first times of Christianity such a flowering of piety that the deserts were populated by tens of thousands of monastics, not to speak of the great numbers of pious laity from whom they came. But then, by reason of moral licentiousness, there followed such an

impoverishment of Christian piety in that country that at a certain time in Alexandria the patriarch remained with only one priest.

"... After the three portentous names 'Rome, Troy, Egypt', the name of 'Russia' was also mentioned - Russia, which at the present time is counted as an independent Orthodox state, but where the elements of foreign heterodoxy and impiety have already penetrated and taken root among us and threaten us with the same sufferings as the above-mentioned countries have undergone.

"Then there comes the word 'Bible'. No other state is mentioned. This may signify that *if in Russia, too, because of the disdain of God's commandments and the weakening of the canons and decrees of the Orthodox Church and for other reasons, piety is impoverished, then there must immediately follow the final fulfilment of that which is written at the end of the Bible, in the Apocalypse of St. John the Theologian.*

"He who saw this vision correctly observed that the explanation given him by an inner voice was terrible. Terrible will be the Second Coming of Christ and terrible the last judgement of the world. But not without terrors will also be the period before that when the Antichrist will reign, as it is said in the Apocalypse: 'And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and death shall flee from them' (9.6). *The Antichrist will come during a period of anarchy*, as the apostle says: 'until he that restraineth be taken away from the midst' (II Thessalonians 2.7), that is, *when the powers that be no longer exist.*"

St. Ambrose's identification of "him that restraineth" the coming of the Antichrist with the Russian State had long roots in the patristic writings. St. John Chrysostom, Blessed Theophylact and others identified him with the Roman emperor, whose successor, as being the emperor of "the Third Rome", Russia, was the Russian Tsar. Metropolitan Philaret had restated the political teaching of Orthodoxy with exceptional eloquence in the previous reign. And now St. Theophan the Recluse wrote: "The Tsar's authority, having in its hands the means of restraining the movements of the people and relying on Christian principles itself, does not allow the people to fall away from them, but will restrain it. And since the main work of the Antichrist will be to turn everyone away from Christ, he will not appear as long as the Tsar is in power. The latter's authority will not let him show himself, but will prevent him from acting in his own spirit. That is what he that restraineth is. When the Tsar's authority falls, and the peoples everywhere acquire self-government (republics, democracies), then the Antichrist will have room to manoeuvre. It will not be difficult for Satan to train voices urging apostasy from Christ, as experience showed in the time of the French revolution. Nobody will give a powerful 'veto' to this. A humble declaration of faith will not be tolerated. And so, when these arrangements have been made everywhere, arrangements

which are favourable to the exposure of antichristian aims, then the Antichrist will also appear. Until that time he waits, and is restrained."

St. Theophan wrote: “When these principles [Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality] weaken or are changed, the Russian people will cease to be Russian. It will then lose its sacred three-coloured banner.” And again: “Our Russians are beginning to decline from the faith: one part is completely and in all ways falling into unbelief, another is falling into Protestantism, a third is secretly weaving together beliefs in such a way as to bring together spiritism and geological madness with Divine Revelation. Evil is growing: evil faith and lack of faith are raising their head: faith and Orthodoxy are weakening. Will we come to our senses? O Lord! Save and have mercy on Orthodox Russia from Thy righteous and fitting punishment!”

Again, he wrote: “Do you know what bleak thoughts I have? And they are not unfounded. I meet people who are numbered among the Orthodox, who in spirit are Voltairians, naturalists, Lutherans, and all manner of free-thinkers. They have studied all the sciences in our institutions of higher education. They are not stupid nor are they evil, but with respect to the Church they are good for nothing. Their fathers and mothers were pious; the ruin came in during the period of their education outside of the family homes. Their memories of childhood and their parents’ spirit keeps them within certain bounds. But what will their own children be like? What will restrain them within the needed bounds? I draw the conclusion from this that in one or two generations our Orthodoxy will dry up.”

The future New-Martyr Anna Zertsalova wrote: "It was a sad time then in the capital. The holy churches, the unconquerable strongholds of Orthodoxy, stood in it as before, as did the unshakeable walls; the holy icons were adorned with shining covers of precious stones, the God-pleasers rested in the churches in their incorrupt relics. But the people were perishing from their vices and errors. The spirit of little faith and debauchery entered everywhere like the most savage plague into unstable heads. Tolstoy and other false teachers crept into inexperienced young hearts with their destructive propaganda, undermining in them the bases of faith and piety. The Lord was forgotten, forgotten were the rules of morality and honour; forgotten were the authorities and order; passions and vices broke out into liberty."

One who succumbed temporarily to this temptation was Sergius Alexandrovich Nilus. "I was born,” he wrote, “in 1862 (25 August), in a family which on my mother's side counted in its midst not a few advanced people - advanced in the spirit for which the 60s of what is now already the last century was distinguished. My parents were nobles and landowners - major ones. It was perhaps because of their links with the land and the peasants that they

escaped any extreme manifestation of the enthusiasms of the 70s. However, they could not escape the general, so to speak platonic-revolutionary spirit of the times, so great then was the allure of the ideas of egalitarianism, freedom of thought, freedom of thought, freedom... yes, perhaps freedom of action, too, which overcame everyone. It seems that at that time there was not one home of the nobility in both the capitals where the state structure of the Russian empire was not reshaped in its own model, according to the measure of its understanding and according to the last book it had read, first from *Sovremennik [The Contemporary]*, and then *Otechestvennie Zapiski [Notes on the Fatherland]* or *Vestnik Evropy [Herald of Europe]*. Of course, the hard food of conversations of a political character did not much help to develop in me religious dreams, as they were then called, and I grew up in complete alienation from the Church, uniting it in my childish imagination only with my old nanny, whom I loved to distraction. Nevertheless, I did not know any prayers and entered a church only by chance; I learned the law of God from teachers who were indifferent, if not outrightly hostile, to the word of God, as an intractable necessity of the school's programme. That was the degree of my knowledge of God when I, as a youth who was Orthodox in name, went to university, where they already, of course, had no time for such trivialities as Orthodoxy. Left to my devices in the life of faith, I reached such an abominable degree of spiritual desolation as only that person can imagine who has lived in this spiritual stench and who has then, while on the path of his own destruction, been detained by the unseen hand of the benevolent Creator."

Nilus did not become a revolutionary. But many others subjected to the same influences did, such as L.A. Tikhomirov. Few were those, like Nilus and Tikhomirov, who found their way back to the ancestral faith of Orthodoxy. Thus did the woolly liberalism of the fathers corrupt the sons, preparing the way for the revolution…

19. RUSSIA AND THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE

If liberalism, socialism, anarchism, indifferentism and other false beliefs were sapping the foundations of Holy Russia, a different, albeit related disease was corrupting the rest of the Orthodox commonwealth: *nationalism*. Like many in the West, the Orthodox nations of the Balkans and the Middle East were thinking only of one thing: *freedom!* The Balkan Orthodox had already started to liberate themselves from the weakening Turks. And the Greeks in the Free State of Greece wanted freedom for their fellow countrymen still under the Ottoman yoke in accordance with their "great idea" of the re-establishment of the Byzantine Empire. Whether the Greek dreams of the resurrection of Byzantium were compatible with the Slav dreams of their own liberation were compatible was a moot point…

These winds of freedom were less strongly felt by the Greeks still under the Ottoman yoke. For one thing, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, together with the monks of Mount Athos over whom it had jurisdiction, stood for strict, traditional Orthodoxy, for which spiritual freedom is much more important than national freedom. As such, it resisted the liberal, westernizing trends that were gradually gaining the upper hand in Athens, Belgrade, Sofia and Bucharest. Another reason was that they already had considerable power. Secondly, the Ecumenical Patriarch was the civil as well as the ecclesiastical head of all the Balkan Orthodox under the Sultan, and the rich Phanariots that supported the Patriarch were among the most privileged citizens of the Ottoman empire.

Where did Russia fit into this picture? For traditionalist Russians, close relations with the Ecumenical Patriarchate were a matter of faith. Russia had been looking to liberate the Balkans and Constantinople from the Turkish yoke since the seventeenth century, when Greek merchants appealed to Tsar Alexei. Catherine II continued this policy. Thus "on April 12th, 1791," writes Roman Golicz, "a cartoon was published in London entitled 'An Imperial Stride!' depicting Catherine the Great… with one foot in Russia and the other in Constantinople. The image recalls the empress's epic tour to the Crimea in 1787 when she entered Kherson through an arch inscribed 'The Way to Constantinople'."

The liberation of Constantinople would continue to be seen as an imperial aim until the very fall of the Russian Empire in 1917. But it was only at two moments, 1829-30 and 1877-78, that the achievement of the aim looked like a distinct possibility, even probability; and the period 1829-1878 can be called the period of "the Eastern Question". This was the question which power was to rule Constantinople; or, alternatively, the question of the liberation of the Orthodox nations subject to the Ottoman Empire – was it to be at their own

hands, at the hands of the Russians, or through the concerted pressure of the great powers on Turkey?

For most of the nineteenth century Russia had been governed in her foreign policy by two not completely compatible principles or obligations: her obligations as a member of the Triple Alliance of monarchist states (Russia, Austria and Prussia) against the revolution, and her obligations as the Third Rome and the Protector of Orthodox Christians everywhere. As a member of the Triple Alliance Russia could not be seen to support any revolution against a legitimate power. That is why Tsar Alexander I refused to support the Greek Revolution in 1821, for the monarchist powers considered the Ottoman empire to be a legitimate power. On the other hand, as the Third Rome and Protector of all Orthodox Christians, Russia naturally wished to come to the aid of the Orthodox Greeks, Serbs, Bulgars and Romanians under the oppressive Turkish yoke. That is why Tsar Nicholas I did intervene in the Greek revolution in 1829 by invading the Ottoman empire – the decisive event enabling the emergence of the Free State of Greece in 1832. But in spite of his intervention in Greece in 1829-32, Nicholas was in general a legitimist – that is, his priority was the protection of what he considered legitimate regimes (in practice, all the Major Powers including Turkey but excluding France) against revolution, rather than Orthodox Christians against Turkey. So it was from a legitimist position that he twice crushed uprisings of the Poles against his own rule, and in 1848 crushed the Hungarian rising against Austria-Hungary.

However, the quarrels between the Greek Orthodox and the Roman Catholics over the Holy Sepulchre in the early 1850s led him to take a more specifically "Third Rome" stand. This led eventually to the Crimean War against Turkey, Britain and France, which, as Oliver Figes' authoritative study of the war confirms, was essentially a religious war between Orthodoxy and Islam, with the Western states supporting the Muslims.

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Now the Ecumenical Patriarch's political loyalties were divided between the Turkish Sultan, to whom he had sworn an oath of allegiance, the King of Greece, to whom his nationalist sympathies drew him, and the Tsar of Russia, to whom his religious principles should have led him. After all, in 1598 Patriarch Jeremiah II had called the tsar the sovereign "*of all Christians throughout the inhabited earth*," and explicitly called his empire "*the Third Rome*". But now, centuries later, the image of Russia the Third Rome had faded from the minds of the Patriarchs; it was the image of a resurrected Byzantine empire that attracted them and their Greek compatriots - this was the truly "great idea". The Russians were, of course, Orthodox, and their help was useful; but the Greeks could liberate themselves. To adapt a phrase of Elder

Philotheus of Pskov, it was as if they said: "Constantinople is the Second Rome, and a Third Rome there will not be"...

But what of the oath of allegiance that the Patriarch had sworn to the Sultan, which was confirmed by his commemoration at the Divine Liturgy? Did not this make the Sultan his political master to whom he owed obedience? Certainly, this was the position of Patriarch Gregory V during the Greek revolution in 1821, and of other distinguished teachers of the Greek nation, such as the Chian, Athanasios Parios. Moreover, the Tsar who was reigning at the time of the Greek Revolution, Alexander I, also recognized the Sultan as a lawful ruler, and as lawful ruler of his Christian subjects, even to the extent of refusing them help when the Greeks rose up against the Sultan in 1821. Even his successor, Tsar Nicholas I, while disliking the Greeks' "demagoguery", and coming to the rescue of the Greeks in 1827 and again in 1829, continued to regard the Sultan as a legitimate ruler.

But the situation was complicated by the fact that, even if the Patriarch commemorated the Sultan at the Liturgy, almost nobody else did! Thus Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov writes: "In Mohammedan Turkey the Orthodox did not pray for the authorities during Divine services, which was witnessed by pilgrims to the Sepulchre of the Lord in Jerusalem. Skaballonovich in his *Interpreted Typicon* writes: 'With the coming of Turkish dominion, the prayers for the kings began to be excluded from the augmented and great litanies and to be substituted by: 'Again we pray for the pious and Orthodox Christians' (p. 152)."

But perhaps commemoration and obedience are different matters, so that commemoration of an authority may be refused while obedience is granted... Or perhaps the Sultan could not be commemorated by name because no heterodox can be commemorated at the Divine Liturgy, but could and should have been prayed for in accordance with the apostolic command... For St. Paul called on the Christians to pray "for all who are in authority [including pagan Roman emperors], that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Timothy 2.2), although the authorities at that time were pagans...

However, there was one important difference between the pagan authorities of St. Paul's time and the heterodox authorities of the nineteenth century. In the former case, the pagan Roman empire was the *only* political authority of the Oecumene. But in the latter case, there *was* a more lawful authority than the heterodox authorities - the Orthodox Christian authority of the Tsar.

The critical question, therefore, was: if there was a war between the Muslim Sultan, on the one side, and the Orthodox Tsar, on the other, whom were the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans to pray for and support?...

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Precisely this situation arose during the Crimean War. The Russians were fighting for a cause dear to every Orthodox Christian heart: the control of the Holy Places. And their enemies were an alliance of three of the major anti-Orthodox powers, Muslim (Turkey), Catholic (France) and Protestant (England). So the supreme loyalty inherent in faithfulness to Orthodox Christianity - a loyalty higher than an oath given to an infidel enemy of the faith under duress - would seem to have dictated that the Patriarch support the Russians. But he neither supported them, nor even prayed for the Russian Tsar at the liturgy.

Perhaps the likely terrible retribution of the Turks on the Balkan Orthodox was a sufficient reason not to support the Tsar openly. But could he not commemorate the Tsar at the liturgy, or at any rate refrain from commemorating the Sultan as other Balkan Churches did? For even if the Sultan was accepted as a legitimate authority to whom obedience was due in normal situations, surely his legitimacy failed when his used his authority to undermine the much higher authority of the Orthodox Christian Empire?

Certainly, the Athonite Elder Hilarion felt that loyalty to the Tsar came first in this situation, although he was not Russian, but Georgian (he had been the confessor of the Imeretian King Solomon II). He instructed his disciple, Hieromonk Sabbas, to celebrate the Divine Liturgy every day and to pray for the Russians during it, and to read the whole Psalter and make many prostrations for the aid of "our Russian brethren". And the rebuke he delivered to his ecclesiastical superior, the Ecumenical Patriarch, was soon shown to have the blessing of God.

"When some time had passed," witnesses Hieromonk Sabbas, "the elder said to me: 'Let's go to the monastery, let's ask the abbot what they know about the war, whether the Russians are winning or the enemies.' When we arrived at the monastery, the abbot with the protoses showed us a paper which the Patriarch and one other hierarch had sent from Constantinople, for distributing to the serving hieromonks in all the monasteries. The Patriarch wrote that they were beseeching God, at the Great Entrance in the Divine Liturgy, to give strength to the Turkish army to subdue the Russians under the feet of the Turks. To this was attached a special prayer which had to be read aloud. When the abbot, Elder Eulogius, had read us this patriarchal epistle and said to the elder: 'Have you understood what our head, our father

is writing to us?', my elder was horrified and said: 'He is not a Christian,' and with sorrow asked: 'Have you read this in the monastery during the Liturgy, as he writes?' But they replied: 'No! May it not be!' But in the decree the Patriarch was threatening any monastery that did not carry out this order that it would suffer a very severe punishment. The next day we went back to our cell. A week passed. A monk came from Grigoriou monastery for the revealing of thoughts, and my elder asked him: 'Did you read this prayer which the Patriarch sent to the monasteries?' He replied: 'Yes, it was read last Sunday during the Liturgy.' The elder said: 'You have not acted well in reading it; you have deprived yourselves of the grace of Holy Baptism, you have deprived your monastery of the grace of God; condemnation has fallen on you!' This monk returned to the monastery and told his elders and abbot that 'we have deprived the monastery of the grace of God, the grace of Holy Baptism - that is what Papa Hilarion is saying.' On the same day a flood swept away the mill, and the fathers began to grumble against the abbot: 'You have destroyed the monastery!' In great sorrow the abbot hurried to make three prostrations before the icon of the Saviour and said: 'My Lord Jesus Christ, I'm going to my spiritual father Hilarion to confess what I have done, and whatever penance he gives me I will carry it out, so that I should not suffer a stroke from sorrow.' Taking with him one hierodeacon and one monk, he set off for the cell of the Holy Apostle James, where we living at the time. When they arrived, my elder was outside the cell. The abbot with his companions, on seeing my elder, fell face downwards in prostrations to the earth and said: 'Bless, holy spiritual father.' Then they went up to kiss his hand. But my elder shouted at them: 'Go away, away from me; I do not accept heretics!' The abbot said: 'I have sinned, I have come to ask you to give me a penance.' But the elder said: 'How did you, wretched one, dare to place Mohammed higher than Christ? God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ says to His Son: "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thine enemies the footstool of Thy feet' (Psalm 109.1), but you ask Him to put His Son under the feet of His enemies! Get away from me, I will not accept you.' With tears the abbot besought the elder to receive him in repentance and give him a penance. But my elder said: 'I am not your spiritual father, go, find a spiritual father and he will give you a penance.' And leaving them outside his cell weeping, the elder went into it and locked the door with a key. What could we do? We went into my cell and there served an all-night vigil, beseeching God to incline the elder to mercy and give a penance to the abbot. In the morning the elder went into the church for the Liturgy, not saying a word to those who had arrived, and after the dismissal of the Liturgy he quickly left for his cell. Those who had arrived with the abbot began to worry that he would suffer a heart attack; they asked me to go in to the elder and call him; perhaps he would listen to me. I went, fell at his feet and asked him: 'Be merciful, give them a penance - the abbot may suffer a stroke in the heart attack with fatal consequences.' Then the elder asked me: 'What penance

shall I give them? God on high is angry with them. What epitimia should I give them which would propitiate God?' When I said to my father: 'Elder, since I read the whole Psalter of the Prophet-King David every day, as you told me, there is one psalm there which fits this case - the 82nd: "O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God..." Command them to read this psalm tomorrow during the Liturgy, when the Cherubic hymn is being sung, at the Great Entrance; let the hieromonk who read the prayer of the Patriarch before stand under the great chandelier, and when all the fathers come together during the Great Entrance, the priest must come out of the altar holding the diskos and chalice in his hands, then let one monk bring a parchment with this psalm written on it in front, and let the hieromonk, who has been waiting under the chandelier, read the whole psalm loudly to the whole brotherhood, and while they are reading it from the second to the ninth verses let them all repeat many times: "Lord, have mercy". And when the remaining verses are being read, let them all say: "Amen!" And then the grace of God will again return to their monastery.' The elder accepted my advice and asked me to call them. When they joyfully entered the cell and made a prostration, the elder said to them: 'Carry out this penance, and the mercy of God will return to you.' Then they began to be disturbed that the exarch sent by the Patriarch, who was caring for the fulfilment of the patriarchal decree in Karyes, might learn about this and might bring great woes upon the monastery. They did not know what to do. The elder said: 'Since you are so frightened, I will take my hieromonk and go to the monastery; and if the exarch or the Turks hear about it, tell them: only Monk Hilarion the Georgian ordered us to do this, and we did it, and and you will be without sorrow.' Then the abbot said: 'Spiritual father, we are also worried and sorrowful about you, because when the Turks will learn about this, they will come here, take you, tie you up in sacks and drown you both in the sea.' My elder replied: 'We are ready, my hieromonk and I, let them drown us.' Then we all together set off in the boat for Grigoriou monastery. When the brothers of the monastery saw us, they rejoiced greatly. In the morning we arranged that the hieromonk who had read the prayer of the Patriarch should himself liturgize; they lit the chandelier during the Cherubic hymn, and when all the fathers were gathered together and the server had come out of the altar preceded by the candle and candle-holder and carrying the chalice and diskos on his head and in his hands, he declared: "May the Lord remember you all in His Kingdom", and stopped under the great chandelier. Then one monk, having in his hand the parchment with the 82nd psalm written on it, stood in front of the priest and began to read: "O God, who shall be likened unto Thee? Be Thou not silent, neither be still, O God..." - to the end. Meanwhile the fathers called out: "Lord, have mercy" until the 10th verse, and then everyone said: "Amen" many times. And they all understood that the grace of God had again come down on the monastery, and the elders from joy embraced men, thanking me

that I had done such a good thing for them; and everyone glorified and thanked God.'

"All this took place under Patriarch Anthimus VI. At the end of the war he was again removed from his throne. After this he came to Athos and settled in the monastery of Esphigmenou, where he had been tonsured. Once, in 1856, on a certain feast-day, he wanted to visit the monastery of St. Panteleimon, where Fr. Hilarion was at that time. During the service the Patriarch was standing in the cathedral of the Protection on the hierarchical see. Father Hilarion passed by him with Fr. Sabbas; he didn't even look at the venerable Patriarch, which the latter immediately noticed. The Patriarch was told about the incident with the prayer in Grigoriou monastery. At the end of the service, as usual, all the guests were invited to the guest-house. The Patriarch, wanting somehow to extract himself from his awkward situation in the eyes of the Russians and Fr. Hilarion, started a conversation on past events and tried to develop the thought that there are cases when a certain 'economia' is demanded, and the care of the Church sometimes requires submission also to some not very lawful demands of the government, if this serves for the good of the Church. 'And so we prayed for the granting of help from on high to our Sultan, and in this way disposed him to mercifulness for our Church and her children, the Orthodox Christians.' When Patriarch Anthimus, under whom the schism with the Bulgarians took place, arrived on Athos after his deposition, and just stepped foot on the shore, the whole of the Holy Mountain shuddered from an underground quake and shook several times. All this was ascribed by the Athonites to the guilt of the Patriarch, and the governing body sent an order throughout the Mountain that they should pray fervently to God that He not punish the inhabitants of the Holy Mountain with His righteous wrath, but that He have mercy according to His mercy."

There was therefore a fine line to be drawn between submission to the Sultan as the lawful sovereign, and a too-comfortable adaptation to the conditions of this Babylonian captivity. The Tsar thought that the Orthodox did not have the right to rebel against the Sultan of their own will, without the blessing of himself as the Emperor of the Third Rome. But the corollary of this view was that when the Tsar entered into war with the Sultan, it was the duty of the Orthodox subjects of the Sultan to pray for victory for the Tsar. For, as Fr. Hilarion said, echoing the words of St. Seraphim of Sarov: "The other peoples' kings often make themselves out to be something great, but not one of them is a king in reality, but they are only adorned and flatter themselves with a great name, but God is not favourably disposed towards them, and does not abide in them. They reign only in part by the condescension of God. *Therefore he who does not love his God-established tsar is not worthy of being called a Christian.*"

And yet back home, in Russia, the foundations of love for the God-established tsar were being shaken, as were all the foundations of the Christian life. As St. Macarius, the great Elder of Optina, wrote: "The heart flows with blood, in pondering our beloved fatherland Russia, our dear mother. Where is she racing headlong, what is she seeking? What does she await? Education increases but it is pseudo-education, it deceives itself in its hope. The young generation is not being nourished by the milk of the doctrine of our Holy Orthodox Church but has been poisoned by some alien, vile, venomous spirit, and how long can this continue? Of course, in the decrees of God's Providence it has been written what must come to pass, but this has been hidden from us in His unfathomable wisdom…"

20. THE EASTERN QUESTION

As we have seen, the Orthodox traditionalism of the Ecumenical patriarchate made it a natural ally of the Russian government. However, after the Crimean War, Russia was no longer protector of the Christians at the Sublime Porte – and the Greeks felt the difference. And not only Greeks: in 1860 the Arab Orthodox of Damascus were subjected to a massacre which Russia was not able to prevent or avenge. According to A.P. Lopukhin, "the Christian subjects of the Sultan, whatever oppression and humiliation they were suffering, were now unable to rely on any outside help but were obliged to rely solely on their own resources… During the last years of the reign of Abdul Mecid [1839-61], the Greeks not only remained in a dreadful social and economic state, but even lost many of their former rights and privileges."

The reason for this was a series of liberal reforms that the Western Powers imposed on Turkey at the Treaty of Paris in 1856, and which the Ottomans issued in the form of an Imperial Rescript. These were seen as supplementing and strengthening the policy of reform known as tanzimat which Turkey had begun in 1839. They aimed to improve the lot of the Christians under Ottoman rule - but actually made it worse. Thus both Christians and Muslims were promised equality before the law in place of their separate legal systems – which, however, both groups wanted to retain. Again, the economic reforms, which essentially involved the imposition of liberal free-trade principles on the empire, were harmful to both groups. For neither the Orthodox nor the Muslims could compete with the mass-produced products now pouring in from the West, especially Britain, while Ottoman infant industries were deprived of the protection they needed in order to survive.

As living conditions declined, and the power of the patriarch over his people weakened, national passions exploded. In 1861 rebellions broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Bulgaria, Wallachia and Moldavia. In 1866 it was the turn of the island of Crete, where in an extraordinary outburst of patriotic passion reminiscent of the Russian Old Ritualists Abbot Gabriel of the monastery of Arkadiou blew up himself and nearly a thousand other Greeks rather than surrender to the Turks. Further rebellions broke out in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Bulgaria in the 1870s.

These events placed the Russian government in a quandary. Although the Crimean War constituted a defeat for the "Third Rome" policy, it inflicted even more damage on the legitimist principle; for illegitimate France was now legitimized again (the treaty ending the war was signed in Paris), while the Tsars never again fully trusted the legitimate monarchy of Austria-Hungary, which had not supported Russia in the war. So intervention for the sake of the

Orthodox again became popular, especially as a new wave of rebellions against Turkish rule began in the Balkans.

However, the Russian intervention under Alexander II was different from earlier interventions under Nicholas I. Under Nicholas, wrote Leontiev, "there was more talk of *the rights of Russian protection, of Russian power*." However, from the 1860s "Russian diplomacy, the Russian press and Russian society began to speak more and more loudly in favour of the Christians of the East, without relying, as in the 50s, on the right *of our power*, but much more on *the rights of the Sultan's Christian subjects themselves*." In other words, *human* rights, rather than *Russia's rights.* And so Turkey "was forced to make concessions to us constantly on the path of the liberal reforms that we suggested for the Christians. Because of this Turkey became weaker; the Christians became bolder and bolder, and we in the course of twenty years in all, step by step, destroyed the Turkish empire…"

But the paradoxical fact was that the gradual weakening of the Ottoman empire, and liberation of the Christians from under the Turkish yoke, while to be welcomed in itself, contained great spiritual dangers for the Orthodox commonwealth. For the removal of the yoke gave renewed strength to two diseases that had plagued the Orthodox since even before 1453: an inclination towards western humanist culture; and disunity among themselves on ethnic lines. Moreover, from the time of the French revolution, and especially after the Greek revolution of 1821, the two diseases began to work on each other. Thus western ideas about freedom and the rights of individuals and nations began to interact with frictions among the Christians caused by Greek bishops' insensitivity to the needs of their Slavic, Romanian and Arabic flocks to produce a potentially revolutionary situation.

The Turkish conquest of the whole of the Balkans suppressed both diseases without completely eliminating either. On the one hand, western influence was seen as harmful by the Turks as it was by the Christians, and the Ottoman authorities acted to cut it off. On the other hand, the millet system recognised only one Orthodox nation under the Ecumenical Patriarch, thereby cutting off the possibility of inter-Orthodox wars.

These two very important benefits of the Turkish yoke outweighed its disadvantages in the form of the restrictions on missionary activity, the forced induction of Bosnian boys into the Janissaries, and intermittent persecutions; just as the advantages of the pagan pax Romana had outweighed its disadvantages. The Christian leaders in both Church and State – specifically, the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople – understood this. So they did not try to destroy the empire, while trying to mitigate its savagery.

Leontiev also understood this. Thus "it is necessary," he wrote, "as far as possible, to preserve the Porte; the Porte must be served; it must be defended. And I agree with this point of view of the Phanariots: the pasha is better than the Hellene democratic nomarch (prefect): the pasha is more monarchical, more statist, cleverer, broader."

*

The Balkan Christians were torn by contradictory universalist and nationalist ideas. The Greek "great idea" ( ), otherwise known as *Pan-Hellenism,* was essentially nationalist in aim; it aspired to unite all the traditionally Greek lands not yet freed from the Turks - Crete, Epirus, Macedonia, Thrace, even Constantinople and the vast territory of Asia Minor – under Greek suzerainty. This idea dated from well before the Greek revolution of 1821; some say it began immediately after the fall of Constantinople in 1453; but it gathered headway after the foundation of the Free State of Greece, being nourished especially by western-educated liberals in Athens. It is not to be confused with the universalist idea of *Byzantinism,* the faith and culture of Christian Rome…

Unfortunately, Pan-Hellenism tended to enter into conflict with other Orthodox nationalisms, especially those of the Serbs and Bulgars. Thus in Macedonia and Thrace there were now more Slavs than Greeks – and the Slavs were not going to give up their lands to the Greeks without a fight. However, Greek nationalist pressure was exerted not only in lands that had traditionally been inhabited mainly by Greeks, like Macedonia and Thrace, but also in originally Slavic (and Arab) lands, where Greek-speaking priests were imposed on non-Greek-speaking populations.

These injustices suffered by the Slavs at the hands of the Greeks elicited the sympathy of notable Russians such as Alexis Khomiakov and St. Theophan the Recluse. The latter, as archimandrite, was sent by the Russian government and the Holy Synod to Constantinople to gather information on the Greco-Bulgarian quarrel. On March 9, 1857 he presented his report, in which his sympathies for the Bulgarians were manifest. However, on the broader political plane he by no means rejected the Ecumenical Patriarchate, but called on "magnanimous" Russia to come to her aid – "we must not abandon our mother in the faith in this helpless situation of hers".

The Greeks distrusted the movement in Russian society for the liberation of the Southern Slavs. Whereas earlier generations would have welcomed any incursion of Russia into the Balkans, hoping that the Tsar would liberate Constantinople and give it to the Greeks, the modern, more nationalist-minded Greeks rejected any such interference. For in Free Greece Russia was

no longer seen as the liberator of the Balkans for the sake of the Orthodoxy that the Russian and Balkan peoples shared, but as the potential enslaver of the Balkans for the sake of Russian *Pan-Slavism*. More specifically, the Greeks suspected that Russia wanted to help Bulgaria take the ancient Greek lands of Thrace and Macedonia in which there was now a large Bulgarian population. Thus Pan-Slavism was seen as the great threat to Pan-Hellenism. True, many Greeks, especially in the Ottoman Empire and on Mount Athos, cherished more charitable views of Russia, which continued to support the Christians under the Turkish yoke in many ways. But the views of the western-educated liberals in Athens were gaining ground…

A sign of the times was the court case that took place on Mount Athos in 1874-1875 between the Russian and Greek monks of the monastery of St. Panteleimon with regard to the rights of the Russian monks to stay there. "The case divided the whole of Athos into two opposing camps: the Greek monks and the Russian monks. Only a few of the Greeks had the courage to support the Russians. Thanks to the energy and insistence with which the Russian monks defended their rights to the monastery, with documents in their hands and with the strong support of the Russian consul at the Porte [Count N.P. Ignatiev], the case ended with victory for the Russians."

The phenomenon of Pan-Slavism was misunderstood and exaggerated by the Greeks. While there was some talk in Russia – for example, by Michael Katkov at the ethnographic exhibition in Moscow in 1867 – of bringing all the Slavs together into a single polity under Russia just as the German lands were being brought together under Prussia, this was never a serious political proposition and never entertained by any of the Tsars. It existed more in the minds of the Greeks than in reality. Even the Pan-Slavism of a man like General Fadeyev can be called this only with major qualifications.

Thus consider his *Opinion on the Eastern Question* of 1876: "The liberated East of Europe, if it be liberated at all, will require: a durable bond of union, a common head with a common council, the transaction of international affairs and the military command in the hands of that head, the Tsar of Russia, the natural chief of all the Slavs and Orthodox… Every Russian, as well as every Slav and every Orthodox Christian, should desire to see chiefly the Russian reigning House cover the liberated soil of Eastern Europe with its branches, under the supremacy and lead of the Tsar of Russia, long recognized, in the expectation of the people, as the direct heir of Constantine the Great." The ideology expressed here is not Pan-Slavism, but that of *Moscow the Third Rome,* the idea – which goes a long way back, before the age of nationalism – that Russia, as the successor of Rome and Byzantium, is the natural protector of all Orthodox Christians. Hence the reference to "all the Slavs *and Orthodox*", and "every Slav *and every Orthodox Christian*", and to Constantine the Great –

who, needless to say, was not a Slav.

For what in fact united *all* the Slavs as opposed to the Orthodox Slavic nations? Less than one might expect….

Russia herself was far from being a purely Slavic empire; her aristocracy had been accepting Tatar and German nobles into its ranks for centuries. With the next largest Slavic nation, Poland, she was in a state of constant friction, as the Roman Catholic Poles did everything in their power to undermine Orthodox Russian power. With the Catholic and Protestant Slavs of the Austro-Hungarian Empire – Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, Slovenes – she was on more friendly terms. But it was not in her interests to foment revolution on ethnic lines in Austria, and as recently as 1848 Russian armies had acted to bolster Austrian power against the Magyars. With the Serbs and the Bulgars Russia had both blood and Orthodox Christianity in common. But a political union with these nations – even if they wanted it, - which most did not, – would have required absorbing non-Orthodox Hungary and non-Slavic Romania as well.

Nor was it in Russia's interests to support individual Slavic nationalisms. As Tom Gallacher points out, "as a multi-national empire in its own right, Russia was hostile to the pretensions of European small state nationalism." For to support, say, Bulgarian pretensions to an independent Greater Bulgaria – as opposed to simply protecting Bulgarians suffering from Turkish cruelty – would have created conflicts with the Greeks, the Romanians and the Serbs; whereas it was in Russia's interests to see unity among all the Orthodox nations. Even supposing that Russia in the name of some mythical Pan-Slavist ideal had been willing and able to conquer the whole of the Balkans and take Constantinople, she could not have held on to her gains for long. First, the western powers, including the new rising power of Germany, would have been stirred up to launch another crusade against her. Secondly, to drive the Turks out of Constantinople would not have meant their final defeat, and further operations deep into Asia would have been necessary. But thirdly and most importantly, the union between the Tsar of Russia and the Patriarch of Constantinople, upon which the whole of the Orthodox commonwealth was based, would have been shattered. For what then would the position of the Patriarch within the Russian empire have been? Still the first hierarch of Orthodoxy, or de facto subordinate to the Russian Synod? How would the Greeks (not to mention the Southern Slavs) react to exchanging one form of foreign dominion for another, albeit Orthodox one?

A rare true Pan-Slavist in the political sense was Nicholas Danilevsky, whose *Russia and Europe* (1869) made use of Slavophile ideas from the 1840s. Danilevsky distinguished ten types of civilization in history: (1) Egyptian, (2)

Chinese, (3) Assyrian-Babylonian-Phoenician or Ancient Semitic, (4) Hindu, (5) Iranian, (6) Hebrew, (7) Ancient Greek, (8) Roman, (9) Neo-Semitic or Arabian, and (10) Romano-Germanic or European. He believed that after Russia had conquered Constantinople and liberated and united the Slavs under her rule, she would create an eleventh type of civilization or cultural type.

Being a form of nationalist historicism, Danilevsky's theory identified the *latest* in history with the *best*. And so Slavism, being the last in the series of "historico-cultural" types was the best. "The new Slavic civilization, with its capital at Constantinople, would synthesize the highest achievements of its predecessors in religion (Israel), culture (Greece), political order (Rome) and socio-economic progress (modern Europe), and would supplement them with the Slavic genius for social and economic justice. 'These four rivers will unite on the wide plains of Slavdom into a mighty sea.'…"

Strictly speaking, however, "best" should not be understood here in relation to a universal scale of values, insofar as each "historico-cultural" type was sui generis and incommensurable, according to Danilevsky. However, this reduced the significance of Danilevsky's theory. For if no one civilization, even the Slavic, can be considered better than any other according to a universal scale of values, then there is no reason to consider it to be better in any real, objective sense…

In spite of the existence of one or two true Pan-Slavists like Danilevsky, Mark Almond is right in asserting that "Pan-Slavism remained a minority taste in Alexander II's Russia. Although it attracted interest among journalists and academics as well as curious politicians wondering whether it might serve imperial interests abroad or undermine stability at home, even the Slavic Congress founded in 1858 or the high profile Slavic Congress in Moscow in 1867 attracted little more than interest. Cash to support the idea of Pan-Slavism was in short supply. The Slavic Committee made do with 1700 rubles a year even in 1867, at the height of public interest before the war a decade later."

An important disciple of Danilevsky was Constantine Leontiev. However, if Leontiev had ever really been an adherent of Danilevsky's Pan-Slavism, he soon abandoned it under the influence of the holy Optina Elders, especially St. Ambrose, and a closer knowledge of the East. Thus "towards the end of his life, in the early 1890s, he finally lost his faith in Russia's ability to create a distinctive new cultural type. The future, he prophesied, belonged to socialism; possibly a Russian tsar would stand at the head of the socialist movement and would organize and discipline it just as the Emperor Constantine had 'organized' Christianity. Or perhaps, he wrote in another

apocalyptic prediction, a democratic and secular Russia would become the home of the Antichrist…"

A more important enduring influence in the work of Leontiev was early Slavophilism. However, he was more appreciative than any of the Slavophiles of the continuing importance of Greek Orthodoxy. Leontiev believed that if one subtracted Byzantinism from Slavdom, very little distinctively different was left. An ardent Philhellene, he thought that narrowly *Serbian* and *Bulgarian* nationalisms were real and powerful forces, very similar in their aims and psychology to Greek nationalism, and, like contemporary Greek nationalism, sadly lacking in that exalted and spiritual form of "universalist nationalism" that he called *Byzantinism*. These petty nationalisms, argued Leontiev, were closely related to liberalism. They were all rooted in the French revolution: just as liberalism insisted on the essential equality of all men and their "human rights", so these nationalisms insisted on the essential equality of all nations and their "national rights". But this common striving for "national rights" made the nations very similar in their essential egoism; it erased *individuality* in the name of *individualism, hierarchy* in the name of *egalitarianism.*

Leontiev believed, as Walicki writes, that "nations were a creative force only when they represented a specific culture: 'naked' or purely 'tribal' nationalism was a corrosive force destroying both culture and the state, a levelling process that was, in the last resort, cosmopolitan; in fact, nationalism was only a mask for liberal and egalitarian tendencies, a specific metamorphosis of the universal process of disintegration".

According to Leontiev, the nations' striving to be independent was based precisely on their desire to be like every other nation: "Having become politically liberated, *they are very glad, whether in everyday life or in ideas, to be like everyone else*". Therefore nationalism, freed from the universalist idea of Christianity, leads in the end to a soulless, secular cosmopolitanism. "In the whole of Europe the purely national, that is, *ethnic* principle, once released from its *religious fetters*, will at its triumph give fruits that are by no means national, but, on the contrary, in the highest degree cosmopolitan, or, more precisely, *revolutionary*." The nations were like a man who is released from prison during an epidemic. It would be safer for him to remain in prison until the epidemic passes instead of striving for "liberation". In the same way, "the political nationalism of our time does not give national isolation, because the overwhelming influence of cosmopolitan tastes is too strong…"

Leontiev foresaw that state nationalism could lead to the internationalist *abolition* or *merging* of states. "A grouping of states according to pure nationalities," wrote Leontiev, "will lead European man very quickly to the

dominion of internationalism" – that is, a European Union or even a Global United Nations. "A state grouping *according to tribes and nations* is… nothing other than the preparation - striking in its force and vividness - for the transition to a cosmopolitan state, first a pan-European one, and then, perhaps, a global one, too! This is terrible! But still more terrible, in my opinion, is the fact that so far in Russia nobody has seen this or wants to understand it..."

"This striving for unity", writes Wil van den Bercken, "provoked in Leontiev a fear of cultural impoverishment. He feared that the old capital cities of Europe would be swept off the map because formerly they had been centres of hostility between the European nations, and that the monarchies would disappear in favour of 'a banal workers' republic'. Leontiev asks himself: 'What price must be paid for such a fusion? Will not a new pan-European state have to dispense in principle with recognizing all local differences?... In any case France, Germany, Italy, Spain, etc. will cease to exist as states; they will become districts of the new state as former Piedmont, Tuscany, Rome and Naples have become districts for Italy, and as now Hessen, Hanover and Prussia have themselves become districts of pan-Germany; they will become for pan-Europe what Burgundy and Brittany have long become for France!' According to Leontiev, the cultural complexity of Europe cannot be maintained in a Europe which has been democratically levelled down, but only in the various monarchistic states of Europe…"

Orthodoxy recognizes no essential difference between Jew and Greek, Scythian and barbarian *so long as they are all Orthodox*, all members of the Church. The same applies on the collective level, between nations. This is the *Orthodox egalitarianism.*

So it went against the spirit of Orthodoxy for Russia to take the side of one Orthodox nation against another, or of Slavs against non-Slavs. The aim of Russia, as the protectress of Orthodoxy throughout the world, had to be to cool passions, avert conflicts and build bridges among the Orthodox of different races, rejecting both Pan-Hellenism and Pan-Slavism. Therefore neither Pan-Hellenism nor Pan-Slavism but *Byzantinism*, or *Romanity* (Ρωμειοσυνη), was the ideal, the ideal of a commonwealth of all Orthodox nations united by a strict adherence to Holy Orthodoxy in the religious sphere and the Orthodox Christian emperor in the political sphere.

21. AT THE GATES OF CONSTANTINOPLE

We return now to the competition between the Great Powers, especially Russia and Britain, to control the territories of "the sick man of Europe", Turkey… There had been many wars between Russia and Turkey in the last few centuries, as Russia slowly but steadily expanded south, first towards the northern coast of the Black Sea, and then on towards the Straits and Constantinople herself. But the aim of this war was not expansionist: its aim was to rescue the Orthodox Christians of the Balkans, who were suffering persecution at the hands of their Turkish overlords.

The British for their part persistently tried to oppose Russia's expansion towards the Mediterranean. "British interests in the Balkans," writes Roman Golicz, "derived from wider economic interests in India via the Eastern Mediterranean. In 1858 the British Government had taken direct control over Indian affairs. Since 1869 the Suez Canal had provided it with a direct route to India. Britain needed to secure the shipping routes which passed through areas, like Suez, that were nominally Turkish."

Or rather, that was the theory. In fact, Russia presented no threat to British interests in India. Rather, the real cause of British hostility to Russian expansion was simply visceral jealousy – the jealousy of the world's greatest maritime empire in relation to the world's greatest land-based empire. Disraeli wrote to Queen Victoria that he wanted to save the Ottoman state and "cleanse Central Asia from the Muscovites and throw them into the Caspian Sea." Palmerston himself commented once that "these half-civilized governments such as those of China, Portugal, Spanish America require a Dressing every eight or ten years to keep them in order". "And no one who knew his views on Russia," writes Dominic Lieven, "could doubt his sense that she too deserved to belong to this category."

The conflict really began in Bosnia-Herzegovina, where, as Andrew Wheatcroft writes, "a series of disconnected incidents, beginning with strident Muslim resistance to the plan that a new Orthodox cathedral being built in Sarajevo would tower over the sixteenth-century Begova mosque, sparked violence. From 1872 onwards there was resistance to Ottoman tax-gatherers, with peasants arming themselves and taking refuge in nearby Montenegro. The local authorities responded, as they usually did, with a knee-jerk brutality: by 1876 hundreds of villages had been burned and more than 5,000 Bosnian peasants killed. Soon the contagion of rebellion began to seep into Bulgaria. The threat of a general uprising seemed imminent.

"Every piece of revolutionary propaganda and each intelligence report

read served to bolster the fear. Was the government in Constantinople to disregard the terrorist threats made by the Bulgarian revolutionaries? The insurgents wrote: 'Herzegovina is fighting; Montenegro is spreading over the mountains and coming with help; Serbia is ready to put its forces on the move; Greece is about to declare war; Rumania will not remain neutral. Is there any doubt that death is hanging over Turkey?' In July 1875, at Nevesinje in Herzegovina, the clan chiefs had met and thrown down a challenge to the Turks. One declared: 'Ever since the damned day of Kosovo [Polje, in 1389] the Turk robs us of our life and liberty. Is it not a shame, a shame before all the world, that we bear the arms of heroes and yet are called Turkish subjects? All Christendom waits for us to rise on behalf of our treasured freedom... Today is our opportunity to rebel and to engage in bloody fight.' This guerilla war, in Harold Temperley's view, led directly to the revolt in Bulgaria and all that followed. It was a cruel war on both sides. The first things that the British Consul Holmes [in Sarajevo] saw as he entered Nevesinje were a Turkish boy's head blackening in the sun, and a bloody froth bubbling from the slit throat of a young Turkish girl..."

The Turks replied in kind. When the Bulgars rebelled in the town of Panagyurishte the Turkish irregulars known as "Bashi Bazouks" unleashed a savage wave of reprisals that left about 12,000 dead. Many were martyred precisely because they refused to renounce their Orthodox faith for Islam.

In July, 1876 Serbia and Montenegro declared war on the Turks... "'This time we have to avenge Kosovo!' said Montenegro's Prince Nikola. 'Under Murad I the Serbian empire was destroyed - now during the reign of Murad V it has to rise again.'"

Western governments at first dismissed reports of atrocities against the Orthodox populations, preferring to believe their ambassadors and consuls rather than *The Daily Telegraph*. Disraeli dismissed public concern about the Bulgarian atrocities as "coffee-house babble". And when a conference was convened in Constantinople by the Great Powers, it failed to put any significant pressure on the Turks.

However, opposition to Disraeli's policy of inaction began to mount. In September, 1876 Gladstone, his great rival, published *The Bulgarian Horrors and the Question of the East*: "Let the Turks now carry off their abuses in the only possible manner, namely by carrying off themselves. Their Zaptiehs and their Mindirs, their Bimbashis and their Yuzbachis, their Kaimakams and their Pashas, one and all, bag and baggage, shall I hope to clear out from the province they have desolated and profaned."

Disraeli, on the other hand, ascribed the violence to the activities of the

secret societies, which he said were on the side of Serbia. "Serbia declared war on Turkey, that is to say, the secret societies of Europe declared war on Turkey, societies which have regular agents everywhere, which countenance assassination and which, if necessary, could produce massacre." Then Disraeli and his cabinet, supported by Queen Victoria, decided that if the Russians succeeded in taking Constantinople, this would be a *casus belli*.

Public opinion was also demanding action in Russia. As Sir Geoffrey Hosking writes, "Army officers, society ladies and merchants formed Slavic Benevolent Committees which called meetings, collected money, and began to send volunteers to fight for the Serbian army. Dostoevskii... preached war against the Turks as a means of achieving 'eternal peace'. The authorities decided they could not condemn these efforts out of hand, and allowed Russian officers and men to take leave and volunteer for the Serbian army: among them was Fadeyev's friend, General Mikhail Cherniaev, who soon became an emblematic hero for the Panslavs."

But Cherniaev's support was not enough to save the Serbs from defeat by the Turks. In two months' fighting, the Serbs lost 5000 dead and 200,000 wounded, and the road to Belgrade was left wide open... Only Russian threats to the Porte saved Serbia: in February an armistice was signed returning the situation to the status quo ante.

The Russians were now faced with a dilemma. Either they committed themselves officially to war with Turkey, or the cause of the liberation of their brothers under the Turkish yoke, for which every Russian peasant prayed in his daily prayers, would be lost. In November, 1876 the Tsar spoke of the need to defend the Slavs. And his foreign minister Gorchakov wrote that "national and Christian sentiment in Russia... impose on the Emperor duties which His Majesty cannot disregard". Ivan Aksakov then took up the Tsar's words, invoking the doctrine of Moscow the Third Rome: "The historical conscience of all Russia spoke from the lips of the Tsar. On that memorable day, he spoke as the descendant of Ivan III, who received from the Paleologi the Byzantine arms and combined them with the arms of Moscow, as the descendant of Catherine and of Peter... From these words there can be no drawing back... The slumbering east is now awakened, and not only the Slavs of the Balkans but the whole Slavonic world awaits its regeneration."

However, not all were in favour of the campaign. One of those was Lev Tolstoy; he expressed his opposition in the epilogue to *Anna Karenina.* In spite of the extreme popularity of the novel as a whole, "not all readers," writes Rosamund Bartlett, "relished the epilogue. Levin's disparaging remarks about the Balkan Question and the Russian Volunteer Movement were highly contentious, and ran exactly counter to those of Tolstoy's great rival

Dostoyevsky… Although Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy never met, they were, of course, aware of each other, but were natural antipodes who found many shortcomings in each other's work. As a journalist, it was more or less incumbent upon Dostoyevsky to deliver a verdict on Tolstoy's novel, and after much prevarication he finally came out in print with an opinion of *Anna Karenina* in early 1877. Tolstoy, however, never returned the compliment of publicly commenting on any of Dostoyevsky's fiction, remaining, as always, aloof.

"To begin with, Dostoyevsky was generous with his praise of *Anna Karenina*. He was particularly enthusiastic about Levin as a literary character, and he devoted several pages to the novel in the February issue of his *Diary of a Writer,* the independent monthly journal he had started up in 1876 to explore the character and destiny of the Russian people. But when he read the epilogue he lambasted Levin for being egocentric, unpatriotic and out of touch with the Russian people. He took a dim view of Levin's claim that the Russian people shared his lack of concern for the predicament of the Balkan Slavs, and took strong exception to his declared unwillingness to kill, even if it resulted in the prevention of atrocities. It is here, of course, that we meet in embryonic form the idea of non-resistance to violence which would lie at the heart of the new religious outlook which Tolstoy would develop over the next decade. People like Tolstoy were supposed to be our teachers, Dostoyevsky concluded at the end of his lengthy tirade, but what exactly were they teaching us? Needless to say, Dostoyevsky did not receive a response either in 1877 or in the years leading up to his death in January 1881. But Tolstoy made up for that by spending the next thirty years of his long life doing little else but answering that very question…"

On April 24, 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey, "but more", argues Hosking, "to preserve Russia's position in the European balance of power than with Panslav aims in mind. At a Slavic Benevolent Society meeting Ivan Aksakov called the Russo-Turkish war a 'historical necessity' and added that 'the people had never viewed any war with such conscious sympathy'. There was indeed considerable support for the war among peasants, who regarded it as a struggle on behalf of suffering Orthodox brethren against the cruel and rapacious infidel. A peasant elder from Smolensk province told many years later how the people of his village had been puzzled as to 'Why our Father-Tsar lets his people suffer from the infidel Turks?', and had viewed Russia's entry into the war with relief and satisfaction."

In the spring of 1877 the Russian armies crossed the River Prut into the Romanian Principalities. Then they crossed the Danube, scaled the Balkans and after a ferocious campaign with great losses on both sides conquered Bulgaria and seized Adrianople (Edirne), only a short march from

Constantinople… In January, 1878 Serb and Bulgarian volunteers flocked to the Russian camp. The Russians were now in a similar position to where they had been in the war of 1829-31, when Tsar Nicholas I had reached Adrianople but held back from conquering Constantinople because he did not have the support of the Concert of Europe. Now, however, the Concert no longer existed, and the commander-in-chief of the Russian armies and brother of the Tsar, Grand Duke Nicholas, wrote to the Tsar: "We must go to the centre, to Tsargrad, and there finish the holy cause you have assumed."

He was not the only one who clamoured for the final, killer blow. "'Constantinople must be ours,' wrote Dostoyevsky, who saw its conquest by the Russian armies as nothing less than God's own resolution of the Eastern Question and as the fulfilment of Russia's destiny to liberate Orthodox Christianity.

"'It is not only the magnificent port, not only the access to the seas and oceans, that binds Russia as closely to the resolution... of this fateful question, nor is it even the unification and regeneration of the Slavs. Our goal is more profound, immeasurably more profound. We, Russia, are truly essential and unavoidable both for the whole of Eastern Christendom and for the whole fate of future Orthodoxy on the earth, for its unity. This is what our people and their rulers have always understood. In short, this terrible Eastern Question is virtually our entire fate for years to come. It contains, as it were, all our goals and, mainly, our only way to move out into the fullness of history.'"

However, there were powerful reasons that made the Russians hesitate on the eve of what would have been their greatest victory. First, and most obviously, there was the fierce opposition of the western great powers, and especially Britain. The entire British Mediterranean Squadron was steaming towards the Dardanelles, dispatched by Disraeli as British public opinion turned "jingoistic":

We don't want to fight, but by jingo if we do,
We've got the ships, we've got the men, and we've got the money too;
We've fought the bear before, and while we're Britons true,
The Russians shall not have Constantinople.

Under the influence of this threat, the Russians agreed not to send troops into Constantinople if no British troops were landed on either side of the Straits...

Then, on March 3, at the village of San Stefano, just outside Constantinople, they signed a treaty with the Turks, whereby the latter recognized the full

independence of Romania, Serbia and Montenegro.

"The Treaty also constituted Bulgaria as a tributary principality of Russia; it required a heavy financial indemnity from Turkey; it gave to Russia the right to select a port on the Black Sea; it opened up the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus at all times to Russian vessels; it obtained full rights for all Christians remaining under Turkish rule; and it gave Bessarabia to Russia in exchange for the corner of Bulgaria known as Dobruja."

In little more than 20 years the Russian defeat in the Crimean war had been avenged. It was a great victory for the Orthodox armies...

However, the Great Powers were determined to rob Russia of the fruits of her victory by diplomatic means. Dominic Lieven points out that "before embarking on the struggle, Petersburg agreed with Vienna to limit its war aims and offer territorial compensation to the Habsburgs. In 1877-78, spectacular victories brought the Russian army to the gates of Constantinople. In the excitement, the hero of the Russian nationalist and Slavophile camp, Count Nikolai Ignatev, was allowed to ignore the promises to Austria and to impose a punitive peace on the Ottomans. In part, this reflected the weak control over policy exercised by Alexander II and his aging foreign minister, Prince Alexander Gorchakov. Britain and Austria threatened war unless the terms of the peace were revised. At this point, control over Russia foreign policy was seized by the ambassador in London, Count Petr Shuvalov, who persuaded Alexander II to agree on a compromise with London and Vienna. The terms of this deal were thrashed out at a congress held in Berlin in 1878 under the chairmanship of the German chancellor, Prince Bismarck.

"The events of 1875-78 resonated right down to the First World War in important ways. The crisis revealed the battles over foreign policy within the ruling elite. Petr Shuvalov came from one of Russia's richest and best-connected aristocratic families. Both in his person and in his policies, he was the epitome of the 'court' party. His struggle with Nikolai Ignatev was perceived by much of public opinion as a perfect illustration of how a cosmopolitan Petersburg elite appeased foreign powers at the expense of the national cause. Meanwhile, for foreign observers the chief lesson learned from these years was that nationalist and Slavophile public opinion could push the government into a war that the tsar did not want and could result in policies that risked confrontation with the other powers. No foreign diplomat ever ignored public opinion again or imagined that in autocratic Russia only the emperor and his foreign minister mattered. But the biggest single result of the crisis was the lasting damage it caused to Russo-German relations.

"Ever since Russia had rescued Prussia from Napoleon's dominion in 1813,

the Russo-Prussian alliance had been a constant element in international relations. Alone among the European powers, Prussia had not opposed Russia during the Crimean War. Tsar Alexander II not only remained neutral while Prussia united Germany under its rule but also stopped Austria from intervening on France's side in 1870. Russia had not gone unrewarded for taking this stance. At the end of the Crimean War, the victorious Anglo-French coalition had imposed a peace treaty on Russia that denied her the right to a navy or land fortifications on the Black Sea coast. This was not just humiliating but also a great threat to Russian security. With France defeated and Britain isolated in 1871, Alexander II took the opportunity to force Europe to accept Russia's right to rebuild its land and sea defences in the south. Despite this gain, Russian public opinion continued to believe that Prussia-Germany was in Russia's debt for Russian support both against Napoleon and in the wars of German unification. When at the Congress of Berlin, Bismarck played the role of central chairman and 'honest broker', Russian nationalist opinion boiled over. It failed to recognize that Bismarck's efforts had helped Russia to avoid a potentially disastrous confrontation with Austria and Britain. The raging of Russian public opinion helped to persuade Bismarck to sight the Dual Alliance with Austria in 1879, which committed Germany to defend the Habsburg Empire against Russian aggression.

"Perhaps the break between Germany and Russia would have come in any case. Alexander II might rejoice in the victories over France I 1870-71 of his favourite uncle, Kaiser William I, but his generals immediately saw a united Germany as a threat and began to plan to defend Russia against it. Regardless of government policies, there were deep currents in public opinion pushing toward Germanic solidarity in central Europe. Even leaving these aside, Bismarck had good practical reasons for backing Austria against Russia. Russia was stronger than Austria and might well destroy it in single combat, with dangerous consequences for the European balance of power and internal policies in Germany. Should the Habsburg Empire collapse, Berlin would probably be forced to intervene on behalf of the Austrian-Germans. This might result in a European war. Berlin might even need to absorb the Austrian-Germans into its own empire. Because this would turn the Protestant and Prussian-dominated *Reich* into a country with a Catholic majority, this was a prospect both Bismarck and all traditional Prussians dreaded…"

The Congress agreed that all Russian troops should be withdrawn from the area around Constantinople, and Greater Bulgaria was cut down into two smaller, non-contiguous areas. Britain added Cyprus to her dominions. Serbia, Montenegro and Romania were recognised as independent States (on condition that they gave full rights to the Jews), but Serbia and Montenegro lost the acquisitions they had made in the war. Russia gained Bessarabia – to

Romania's intense annoyance. Bosnia and Herzegovina were handed over to *Austria* for her "temporary" use. In this way, as Archpriest Lev Lebedev pointed out, a mine was laid at the base of the structure of international relations that would later explode into the First World War…

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It seemed that Disraeli, the rabidly anti-Russian Jewish leader of the Western Christian world, had triumphed… And then the Jews proceeded to punish Russia again: "In 1877-1878 the House of Rothschild, by agreement with Disraeli, first bought up, and then threw out onto the market in Berlin a large quantity of Russian securities, which elicited a sharp fall in their rate."

Russia's failure to conquer Constantinople was a great blow to the Slavophiles. "At a Slavic Benevolent Society banquet in June 1878 Ivan Aksakov furiously denounced the Berlin Congress as 'an open conspiracy against the Russian people, with the participation of the representatives of Russia herself!'"

Dostoyevsky was also disillusioned. But his disillusionment was not the product of the failure of his "Pan-Slavist" dreams, as some have made out. For Dostoyevsky's dreams were not "Pan-Slavist", but "Pan-Human", genuinely universalist. His dream was the conversion of the whole world to Christ in Orthodoxy, and thereby to real fraternity. A major step on the road to this dream was to be the liberation and unification of the Orthodox peoples of the East under the Russian tsar through the planting of the Cross on the dome of Hagia Sophia by the Russian armies. Dostoyevsky found real brotherhood only in the Orthodox Church, and in that Orthodox nation which, he believed, had most thoroughly incarnated the ideals of the Gospel – Russia. "The moral idea is Christ. In the West, Christ has been distorted and diminished. It is the kingdom of the Antichrist. We have Orthodoxy. As a consequence, we are the bearers of a clearer understanding of Christ and a new idea for the resurrection of the world… There the *disintegration,* atheism, began earlier: with us, later, but it will begin certainly with the entrenchment of atheism… The whole matter lies in the question: can one, being civilized, that is, a European, that is, believe absolutely in the Divinity of the Son of God, Jesus Christ? (for all faith consists in this)… You see: either everything is contained in faith or nothing is: we recognize the importance of the world through Orthodoxy. And the whole question is, can one believe in Orthodoxy? If one can, then everything is saved: if not, then, better to burn… But if Orthodoxy is impossible for the enlightened man, then… all this is hocus-pocus and Russia's whole strength is provisional… It is possible to believe seriously and in earnest. Here is *everything*, the burden of life for the Russian people and their entire mission and existence to come…"

It was for the sake of Orthodoxy, the true brotherhood, that the Russian armies had sacrificed, and would continue to sacrifice themselves, for the freedom of the Greek, Slav and Romanian peoples. "I am speaking of the unquenchable, inherent thirst in the Russian people for great, universal, brotherly fellowship in the name of Christ." Russia, Dostoyevsky believed, had only temporarily been checked at the Gates of Constantinople, and would one day conquer it and hand it back to the Greeks, even if took a hundred years and more. Nor was this universalist love confined to Russia's brothers in the faith: it extended even to her enemies in Western Europe – that "graveyard of holy miracles". The lost half of Europe, immersed in Catholicism and its child, Protestantism, and its grandchild, atheism, would be converted from Russia: "Light will shine forth from the East!"

But in the meantime, what sorrows, what torture and bloodshed, lay in store for Europe, and first of all for Russia, whose ruling classes were already Orthodox only in name! It was all the fault of the misguided idealism that sought, on the basis of science and rationalism, to *force* men to be happy – or rather, to give them happiness of a kind in exchange for their freedom. This rationalist-absolutist principle was common both to the most believing (Catholic) and most unbelieving (Socialist) factions in Western political life, and was typified in the Grand Inquisitor in *The Brothers Karamazov*, who "in his last remaining years… comes to the clear conviction that it is only the advice of the great and terrible spirit that could bring some sort of supportable order into the life of the feeble rebels, 'the unfinished experimental creatures created as a mockery'. And so, convinced of that, he sees that one has to follow the instructions of the wise spirit, the terrible spirit of death and destruction. He therefore accepts lies and deceptions and leads men consciously to death and destruction. Keeps deceiving them all the way, so that they should not notice where they are being led, for he is anxious that those miserable, blind creatures should at least on the way think themselves happy. And, mind you, the deception is in the name of Him in Whose ideal the old man believed so passionately all his life! Is not that a calamity?…."

Since so many in Russia's educated classes thought like Ivan Karamazov and the Grand Inquisitor (although much less seriously and systematically, for the most part), it was premature to think of the unification of the Orthodox peoples – still less, of the whole of Europe - under the leadership of Russia. The first need was to unite Russia *within* herself. And that meant uniting the educated classes with the bulk of the population, the peasant *narod*, whose lack of education and poverty, and attachment to the Orthodox Tsar and Church, repelled the proud, liberal, self-appointed guardians of the nation's conscience. In fact, populism had been an underlying theme of that generation of liberals, most notably in the attempt of the young revolutionary

narodniki to "go out to the people". Dostoyevsky took it upon himself to show them a surer, because *humbler* way of being united with the people…

22. DEFENDERS OF THE AUTOCRACY: DOSTOYEVSKY AND KATKOV

In his youth Dostoyevsky had been converted from socialism to "Orthodoxy, Autocracy and Nationality (*Narodnost'*)". But he wrote little directly about Autocracy, probably because this would immediately have put off his audience, confining himself to such remarks as: "Our constitution is mutual love. Of the Monarch for the people and of the people for the Monarch." A generation earlier, Slavophiles such as Khomiakov and Kireyevsky had been able to speak openly in support of the Church and the Tsar. But the years 1860-1880 had entrenched liberalism and positivism firmly in the hearts and minds of the intelligentsia. So Dostoyevsky had to approach the subject more indirectly, through the third element of the slogan – Nationality. Such an approach had the further advantage that it was the way Dostoyevsky himself had returned to the faith: from the time of his imprisonment in Siberia, his eyes had slowly been opened to the reality of *the people*, their spiritual beauty and their Orthodox faith.

At the same time, a whole pleiad of artists, the so-called *pochvenniki*, "lovers of the soil", were coming to a similar discovery, giving a kind of second wind to Slavophilism. For example, in 1872, during the celebrations of the bicentenary of that most "anti-*pochvennik*" of tsars, Peter the Great, the young composer Modest Mussorgsky wrote to his closest friend: "The power of the black earth will make itself manifest when you plough to the very bottom. It is possible to plough the black earth with tools wrought of alien materials. And at the end of the 17th century they ploughed Mother Russia with just *such* tools, so that she did not immediately realize what they were ploughing with, and, like the black earth, she *opened up* and began to *breathe*. And she, our beloved, received the various state bureaucrats, who never gave her, the long-suffering one, time to collect herself and to think: '*Where are you pushing me*?' The ignorant and confused were executed: *force*!... But the times are out of joint: the state bureaucrats are not letting the black earth *breathe*.

"'*We've gone forward*!' – you lie. '*We haven't moved*!' Paper, books have gone forward – we *haven't moved*. So long as the people cannot verify *with their own eyes* what is being cooked out of them, as long as they do not *themselves* will what is or is not to be *cooked out of them* – till then, we *haven't moved*! Public benefactors of every kind will seek to glorify themselves, will buttress their glory with documents, but the people groan, and so as not to groan they drink like the devil, and groan worse than ever: we *haven't moved*!"

Mussorgsky composed in *Boris Godunov* and *Khovanschina* two "popular" dramas which evoked the spirit of Mother Russia and the Orthodox Church

as no other work of secular art had done. Dostoyevsky was to do the same in *The Brothers Karamazov*. He hoped, through the beauty of his art, to open the eyes of his fellow *intelligenty* to the people's beauty, helping them thereby to "bow down before the people's truth" – Orthodoxy. In this way, "beauty" – the beauty of the people's truth, the Russian God – "will save the world".

However, Dostoyevsky's concept of the people is easily misunderstood, and needs careful explication. Some have seen in it extreme chauvinism, others – sentimental cosmopolitanism. The very diversity of these reactions indicates a misunderstanding of Dostoyevsky's antinomical reasoning. Let us consider, first, the following words of Shatov in *The Devils*: "Do you know who are now the only 'God-bearing' people on earth, destined to regenerate and save the world in the name of a new god and to whom alone the keys of life and of the new word have been vouchsafed?" The "people" here is, of course, the Russian people. And the God they bear is Christ, Who is "new" only in the sense that the revelation of the truth of Christ in Orthodoxy is something new for those other nations who were once Christian but who have lost the salt of True Christianity. Not that the Russians are considered *genetically* or *racially* superior to all other nations; for "Russianness" is a spiritual concept closely tied up with confession of the one true faith, which may exclude many people of Russian blood (for example, the unbelieving intelligentsia), but include people of other nations with the same faith. Thus Shatov agrees with Stavrogin that "an atheist can't be a Russian", and "an atheist at once ceases to be a Russian". And again: "A man who does not belong to the Greek Orthodox faith cannot be a Russian."

It follows that "the Russian people" is a concept with a universalist content insofar as her Orthodox faith is universal; it is virtually equivalent to the concept of "the Orthodox Christian people", in which "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither barbarian nor Scythian" (Colossians 3.11).

For "if," writes M.V. Zyzykin, "it is possible to call the fact that Christianity has become the content of a certain people's *narodnost'* the national property of that people, then such a property belongs also to the Russian people. But we should rather add the term 'universal' here, because the very nationality is expressed in universality, *universality has become the content of the narodnost'*."

Shatov continues: "The purpose of the whole evolution of a nation, in every people and at every period of its existence, is solely the pursuit of God, their God, their very own God, and faith in Him as the only true one… The people is the body of God. Every people is a people only so long as it has its own particular god and excludes all other gods in the world without any attempt at reconciliation; so long as it believes that by its own god it will conquer and banish all the other gods from the world. So all believed from the

very beginning of time – all the great nations, at any rate, all who have been in any way marked out, all who have played a leading part in the affairs of mankind. It is impossible to go against the facts. The Jews lived only to await the coming of the true God, and they left the true God to the world. The Greeks deified nature and bequeathed the world their religion – that is, philosophy and art. Rome deified the people in the State and bequeathed the State to the nations. France throughout her long history was merely the embodiment and development of the idea of the Roman god, and if she at last flung her Roman god into the abyss and gave herself up to atheism, which for the time being they call socialism, it is only because atheism is still healthier than Roman Catholicism. If a great people does not believe that truth resides in it alone (in itself alone and in it exclusively), if it does not believe that it alone is able and has been chosen to raise up and save everybody by its own truth, it is at once transformed into ethnographical material, and not into a great people…"

It follows that what we would now call "ecumenism" – the belief that other nations' religions are as good as one's own – is the destruction of the nation. And indeed, this is what we see today. For the modern nations who recognize each other's gods have become mere "ethnographical material", members of the United Nations but not nations in the full sense of entities having a spiritual principle and purpose for their independent existence. According to the ecumenist logic, any nation that asserts its own truth in the face of other supposed truths must be "nationalist", and steps must be taken to reduce or destroy its power. Universalism is declared to be good and nationalism bad. It cannot be that a nation's particular, *national* faith may have a *universalist* content.

And yet this is precisely what Dostoyevsky insisted on for Russia…

"Dostoyevsky," wrote Florovsky, "was a faithful follower of the classical Slavophile traditions, and he based his faith in the great destiny marked out for the God-bearing People, not so much on historical intimations, as on that Image of God which he saw in the hidden depths of the Russian people's soul, and on the capacities of the Russian spirit for 'pan-humanity'. Being foreign to a superficial disdain and impure hostility towards the West, whose great 'reposed' he was drawn to venerate with gratitude, he expected future revelations from his own homeland because only in her did he see that unfettered range of personal activity that is equally capable both of the abyss of sanctity and the abyss of sin…, because he considered only the Russian capable of becoming 'pan-human'."

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This, Dostoyevsky's fundamental insight on Russia was summarized and most eloquently expressed in his famous *Pushkin Speech*, delivered at the unveiling of the Pushkin Monument in Moscow on June 8, 1880. In this speech, writes Walicki, Dostoyevsky presents Pushkin as the supreme embodiment in art "of the Russian spirit, a 'prophetic' apparition who had shown the Russian nation its mission and its future.

"In the character of Aleko, the hero of the poem *Gypsies*, and in Evgeny Onegin, Dostoyevsky suggested, Pushkin had been the first to portray 'the unhappy wanderer in his native land, the traditional Russian sufferer detached from the people….' For Dostoyevsky, the term 'wanderer' was an apt description of the entire Russian intelligentsia – both the 'superfluous men' of the forties and the Populists of the seventies. 'The homeless vagrants,' he continued, 'are wandering still, and it seems that it will be long before they disappear'; at present they were seeking refuge in socialism, which did not exist in Aleko's time, and through it hoped to attain universal happiness, for 'a Russian sufferer to find peace needs universal happiness – exactly this: nothing less will satisfy him – of course, as the proposition is confined to theory.'

"Before the wanderer can find peace, however, he must conquer his own pride and humble himself before 'the people's truth'. 'Humble thyself, proud man, and above all, break thy pride,' was the 'Russian solution' Dostoyevsky claimed to have found in Pushkin's poetry. Aleko failed to follow this advice and was therefore asked to leave by the gypsies; Onegin despised Tatiana – a modest girl close to the 'soil' – and by the time he learned to humble himself it was too late. Throughout Pushkin's work, Dostoyevsky declared, there were constant confrontations between the 'Russian wanderers' and the 'people's truth' represented by 'positively beautiful' heroes – men of the soil expressing the spiritual essence of the Russian nation. The purpose of these confrontations was to convince the reader of the need for a 'return to the soil' and a fusion with the people.

"Pushkin himself was proof that such a return was possible without a rejection of universal ideals. Dostoyevsky drew attention to the poet's 'universal susceptibility', his talent for identifying himself with a Spaniard (Don Juan), an Arab ('Imitations of the Koran'), an Englishman ('A Feast During the Plague'), or an ancient Roman ('Egyptian Nights') while still remaining a national poet. This ability Pushkin owed to the 'universality' of the Russian spirit: 'to become a genuine and complete Russian means… to become brother of all men, an all-human man.'

"In his speech Dostoyevsky also spoke about the division into Slavophiles and Westerners, which he regretted as a great, though historically inevitable,

misunderstanding. The impulse behind Peter's reform had been not mere utilitarianism but the desire to extend the frontiers of nationality to include a genuine 'all-humanity'. Dreams of serving humanity had even been the impulse behind the political policies of the Russian state: 'For what else has Russia been doing in her policies, during these two centuries, but serving Europe much more than herself? I do not believe that this took place because of the mere want of aptitude on the part of our statesmen.'

"'Oh the peoples of Europe,' Dostoyevsky exclaimed in a euphoric vein, 'have no idea how dear they are to us! And later – in this I believe – we, well, not we but the Russians of the future, to the last man, will comprehend that to become a genuine Russian means to seek finally to reconcile all European controversies, to show the solution of European anguish in our all-human and all-unifying Russian soil, to embrace in it with brotherly love all our brothers, and finally, perhaps, to utter the ultimate word of great, universal harmony, of the fraternal accord of all nations abiding by the law of Christ's Gospel!'

"Before delivering his 'Address', Dostoyevsky was seriously worried that it might be received coldly by his audience. His fears proved groundless. The speech was an unprecedented success: carried away by enthusiasm, the crowd called out 'our holy man, our prophet', and members of the audience pressed around Dostoyevsky to kiss his hands. Even Turgenev, who had been caricatured in *The Possessed [The Devils]*, came up to embrace him. The solemn moment of universal reconciliation between Slavophiles and Westerners, conservatives and revolutionaries, seemed already at hand…"

The Slavophile Ivan Aksakov "ran onto the stage and declared to the public that my speech was not simply a speech but an historical event! The clouds had been covering the horizon, but here was Dostoyevsky's word, which, like the appearing sun, dispersed all the clouds and lit up everything. From now on there would be brotherhood, and there would be no misunderstandings."

It was indeed an extraordinary event. And while the enthusiasm was short-lived, it represented an historic turning-point: the point at which the unbelieving intelligentsia had the Gospel preached to them in a language and in a context that they could understand and respond to. For a moment it looked as if the "the Two Russias" created by Peter's reforms might be united. With the advantage of hindsight one may pour scorn on such an idea. But, as Metropolitan Anastasy (Gribanovsky) writes: "However accustomed people are to crawling in the dust, they will be grateful to every one who tears them away from the world below and bears them up on his powerful wings to the heavens. A man is ready to give up everything for a moment of pure spiritual joy and bless the name of him who is able to strike on the best strings of his

heart. It is here that one must locate the secret of the amazing success won by the famous speech of Dostoyevsky at the Pushkin festival in Moscow. The genius writer himself later described the impression produced by him upon his listeners in a letter to his wife: 'I read,' he writes, 'loudly, with fire. Everything that I wrote about Tatiana was received with enthusiasm. But when I gave forth at the end about the universal union of men, the hall was as it were in hysterics. When I had finished, I will not tell you about the roars and sobs of joy: people who did not know each other wept, sobbed, embraced each other and swore to be better, not to hate each other from then on, but to love each other. The order of the session was interrupted: *grandes dames*, students, state secretaries – they all embraced and kissed me.' How is one to call this mood in the auditorium, which included in itself the best flower of the whole of educated society, if not a condition of spiritual ecstasy, to which, as it seemed, our cold intelligentsia was least of all capable? By what power did the great writer and knower of hearts accomplish this miracle, forcing all his listeners without distinction of age or social position to feel themselves brothers and pour together in one sacred and great upsurge? He attained it, of course, not by the formal beauty of his speech, which Dostoyevsky usually did not achieve, but the greatness of the proclaimed idea of universal brotherhood, instilled by the fire of great inspiration. This truly prophetic word regenerated the hearts of people, forcing them to recognize the true meaning of life; the truth made them if only for one second not only free, but also happy in their freedom."

June 8, 1880 was the last date on which the deep divisions in Russian society might have been healed, and the slide to revolution halted. However, the opportunity was lost. Disillusion and criticism set in almost immediately from all sides. (The only person who retained his enthusiasm for the Speech for years to come was Ivan Aksakov.) This was less surprising from the liberals, who were looking for another, leftist answer to the question: "What is to be done?" from Dostoyevsky. They forgot that, as Chekhov wrote in 1888, an artist does not attempt to solve concrete social, political or moral problems, but only to place them in their correct context... Somewhat more surprising was the less than ecstatic reaction of the right-wing *litterati*. Thus the famous publisher M.N. Katkov was very happy to publish the Speech in his *Moskovskie Vedomosti (Moscow Gazette)* - but laughed at it in private. Perhaps for him, too, the Speech offered too little in the form of concrete political solutions or advice – an open endorsement of the monarchy, for example.

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And yet Katkov was not far from Dostoyevsky in his views. Katkov had published both *War and Peace* and *Crime and Punishment* in the mid-1860s, - an extraordinary publishing coup, - and went on to publish *Anna Karenina.* "He

was an interesting man," writes A.N. Wilson, "and not the mindless reactionary which some literary historians have made him out to be. In fact, his career is emblematic of much that was happening in those confusing decades of Russian history. He was ten years older than Tolstoy, and his background was Moscow intellectual. He taught philosophy at Moscow University from 1845 onwards, when it was still very much the University where Herzen had learnt and propagated his radical ideas. Katkov was a believer in constitutional government of the English pattern, but his liberalism was to be destroyed in 1863 by the Polish Uprising. Thereafter, we find him associated with extremely conservative, patriotic views – more like those of Dostoyevsky than those of Tolstoy."

"M.N. Katkov wrote that the opposition between Russia and the West consists in the fact that there everything is founded on contractual relations, and in Russia – on faith. If western society is ruled by law, then Russian society is ruled by the idea… There is no question that good principles can be laid at the base of any state, but they are deprived of a firm foundation by the absence of religious feeling and a religious view of the world. Good principles are then held either on instinct, which illumines nothing, or on considerations of public utility. But instinct is an unstable thing in a reasoning being, while public utility is a conventional concept about which every person can have his own opinion."

Like Dostoyevsky, Katkov was striving to build bridges, and especially a bridge between the Tsar and the People. "Russia is powerful," he wrote, "precisely in the fact that her people do not separate themselves from their Sovereign. Is it not in this alone that the sacred significance that the Russian Tsar has for the Russian people consists?" "Only by a misunderstanding do people think that the monarchy and the autocracy exclude 'the freedom of the people'. In actual fact it guarantees it more than any banal constitutionalism. Only the autocratic tsar could, without any revolution, by the single word of a manifesto liberate 20 million slaves." "They say that Russia is deprived of political liberty. They say that although Russian subjects have been given legal civil liberty, they have no political rights. Russian subjects have something more than political rights: they have political obligations. Each Russian subject is obliged to stand watch over the rights of the supreme power and to care for the benefit of the State. It is not so much that each one only has the right to take part in State life and care for its benefits: he is called to this by his duty as a loyal subject. That is our constitution. It is all contained, without paragraphs, in the short formula of our State oath of loyalty…"

Dostoyevsky undoubtedly agreed with all this in principle. However, he was doing something different, something more difficult: not simply *state the*

truth before an audience that was in no way ready to accept it in this direct, undiluted form, but *bring them closer to the truth, and inspire them with the truth*. And with this aim he did not call on his audience to unite around the Tsar.

In any case, he had certain reservations about the Tsardom that made him in some ways closer to his liberal audience than Katkov. In particular, he did not support the "paralysis" that the Petrine system had imposed on the Church, whereas Katkov's views were closer to the official, semi-absolutist position. For example, Katkov wrote: "The whole labour and struggle of Russian History consisted in taking away the power of each over all, in the annihilation of many centres of power. This struggle, which in various forms and under various conditions took place in the history of all the great peoples, was with us difficult, but successful, thanks to the special character of the Orthodox Church, which renounced earthly power and never entered into competition with the State. The difficult process was completed, everything was subjected to one supreme principle and there had to be no place left in the Russian people for any power not dependent on the monarch. In his one-man-rule the Russian people sees the testament of the whole of its life, on him they place all their hope." And again he wrote: "[The Tsar] is not only the sovereign of his country and the leader of his people: he is the God-appointed supervisor and protector of the Orthodox Church, which does not recognize any earthly deputy of Christ above it and has renounced any non-spiritual action, presenting all its cares about its earthly prosperity and order to the leader of the great Orthodox people that it has sanctified."

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Katkov's views were important especially with regard to the Ukrainian question, which began to rear its head shortly after the Polish rebellion of 1863. Katkov supported the repressive actions that were then taken by the Russian Interior Minister Peter Valuev against incipient "Ukrainianization", which he regarded as "Polonization" by the back door. In a circular dated June 18, 1863, he banned most Ukrainian-language publications - between 1863 and 1868 their number dropped from thirty-three to one. "Valuev's circular," writes Serhii Plokhy, "was directed mainly against the Ukrainian intellectuals, whose efforts to introduce their language into churches and schools he regarded as part of a Polish intrigue to undermine the empire. 'That phenomenon is all the more deplorable and deserving of attention,' stated the circular, 'because it coincides with the designs of the Poles and is all but obliged to them for its origin; judging by the manuscripts received by the censors and by the fact that most of the Little Russian compositions actually come from the Poles.' Valuev claimed that the 'adherents of the Little Russian nationality' were turning to the common people for political reasons. He noted that many of them has already been investigated by the government

and were being accused by their own compatriots of 'separatists designs hostile to Russia and fatal for Little Russia.'"

The Russians refused to accept the existence either of a distinct Ukrainian people or of a Ukrainian language: "there never has been a distinct Little Russian language, and there never will be one", declared Valuev. The Ukrainians were called "Little Russians" by contrast with the "Great Russians" to the north, the important point being that they were all Russians, being really one nation, not two. As Dominic Lieven writes, tsarist statesmen "focused their attention on the linguistic and cultural foundations of national identity and therefore of subsequent political nationalism. In 1863 General Annenkov, the governor-general of the Kiev region, flatly opposed the publication of the bible in Ukrainian, commenting that by its publication Ukrainian nationalists 'would achieve so to speak the recognition of the independence of the Little Russian language, and then of course they will make claims to autonomy for Little Russia.' Thirteen years later a key government memorandum warned of the dangers of 'various doctrines which superficially contain nothing political and seem to relate only to the sphere of purely academic and artistic interests'. In the long run their danger could be very great. 'Nothing divides people as much as differences in speech and writing. Permitting the creation of a special literature for the common people in the Ukrainian dialect would signify collaborating in the alienation of Ukraine from the rest of Russia.' The memorandum went on to emphasize the very great importance of the Ukrainians to the Russian nation and state: 'To permit the separation… of thirteen million Little Russians would be the utmost political carelessness, especially in view of the unifying movement which is going on alongside us among the German tribe.' In the light of such views the tsarist regime did its utmost from 1876 to stop the development of a written Ukrainian language or high culture."

"On June 21, 1863," continues Plokhy, "a month before Valuev signed his circular, Katkov added his voice to the discussion on prohibiting Ukrainian-language publications in an article with a telling title, 'The Coincidence of Ukrainophile Interests with Polish Interests'. In complete agreement with the adherents of pan-Russian Orthodoxy in [the ex-uniate Bishop] Iosif Semashko's camp, Katkov accused the Ukrainophiles of being instruments not only of Polish but also of Jesuit intrigue. In doing so, Katkov not only politicized the question of Ukrainian-language publications but in fact criminalized it, opening the door to the politically damaging Polish-Ukrainian connection in Valuev's circular. More importantly in the long run, Katkov provided intellectual foundations for the repressive policies vis-à-vis the Ukrainian cultural and political movement that would be adopted by the imperial government and last for decades. Katkov argued that 'Ukraine has never had its own history, never been a separate state: the Ukrainian people

are an authentic Russian people, an indigenous Russian people, an essential part of the Russian people, without which it can hardly remain what it is now.' Although he recognized linguistic and cultural differences between the branches of the 'Russian nation', he considered them only locally significant. If the big Russian nation was to develop and prevail, the cultivation of local dialects would have to be arrested…"

23. DEFENDERS OF THE CHURCH: DOSTOYEVSKY AND LEONTIEV

If Katkov would have preferred more on the monarchy in Dostoyevsky's speech, Constantine Leontiev was scandalised by the lack of mention of *the Church*. Volgin writes that "at the end of the Pushkin festival Pobedonostev in a restrained way, without going into details, congratulated Dostoyevsky on his success. And then immediately after his congratulations he sent him 'Warsaw Diary' with an article by Constantine Leontiev. This article was angry and crushing. C. Leontiev not only annihilated the Speech point by point from the point of view of his ascetic… Christianity, but compared it directly with another public speech that had taken place at almost the same time as the Moscow festivities, in Yaroslavl diocese at a graduation ceremony in a school for the daughters of clergymen. 'In the speech of Mr. Pobedonostev (the speaker was precisely him – I.V.),' writes Leontiev, 'Christ is known in no other way that through the Church: "love the Church first of all". In the speech of Mr. Dostoyevsky Christ… is so accessible to each of us in bypassing the Church, that we consider that we have the right… to ascribe to the Saviour promises that He never uttered concerning "the universal brotherhood of the peoples", "general peace" and "harmony"…'"

Leontiev had written much about the invasion of the twin spirits of liberal cosmopolitanism and nationalism into the Orthodox world. So when he wrote that Dostoyevsky "extracted out of the spirit of Pushkin's genius the prophetic thought of the 'cosmopolitan' mission of the Slavs", it is with scarcely concealed irony. This irony becomes crushing and without any concealment when he spoke about waiting for "the fulfilment of the prophecy of Dostoyevsky, 'until the Slavs teach the whole of humanity this pan-human love', which neither the Holy Fathers nor the Apostles nor the Divine Redeemer Himself was able to confirm absolutely in the hearts of men".

But was he being fair? Dostoyevsky was not looking to the fusion of the races into one liberal-ecumenist conglomerate, but to their union in spirit and true brotherhood through the adoption of the Orthodox faith. Nor was he a chauvinist, but simply believed that the Russian people was the bearer of a truly universal content, the Orthodox Christian Gospel, which it would one day preach to all nations; for "this Kingdom of the Gospel shall be preached to all nations, and *then* shall the end come" (Matthew 24.14). As he wrote in another place: "You see, I've seen the Truth. I've seen it, and I know that men can be happy and beautiful without losing the ability to live on earth. I cannot – I refuse to believe that wickedness is the normal state of men. And when they laugh at me, it is essentially at that belief of mine."

Leontiev returned to his criticism of this romantic, cosmopolitan or "chiliast" faith of Dostoyevsky's, as he considered it, in an article entitled "On Universal Love", in which he supported the liberal writer A.D. Gradovsky's claim that Dostoyevsky was ignoring the prophecies of the Antichrist. "The prophecy of the general reconciliation of people in Christ," he wrote, "is not an Orthodox prophecy, but some kind of general-humanitarian [prophecy]. The Church of this world does not promise this, and 'he who disobeys the Church, let him be unto thee as a pagan and a publican'".

Dostoyevsky himself replied to Gradovsky (and therefore also to Leontiev) as follows: "In your triumphant irony concerning the words in my Speech to the effect that we may, perhaps, utter a word of 'final harmony' in mankind, you seize on the Apocalypse and venomously cry out:

"'By a word you will accomplish that which has not been foretold in the Apocalypse! On the contrary, the Apocalypse foretells, not "final agreement", but final "disagreement" with the coming of the Antichrist. But why should the Antichrist come if we utter a word of "final harmony".'

"This is terribly witty, only you have cheated here. You probably have not read the Apocalypse to the end, Mr. Gradovsky. There it is precisely said that during the most powerful disagreements, not the Antichrist, but Christ will come and establish His Kingdom on earth (do you hear, on earth) for 1000 years. But it is added at this point: blessed is he who will take part in the first resurrection, that is, in this Kingdom. Well, it is in that time, perhaps, that we shall utter that word of final harmony which I talk about in my Speech."

Leontiev counters by more or less accusing Dostoyevsky of the heresy of chiliasm: "It is not the complete and universal triumph of love and general righteousness on *this* earth that is promised to us by Christ and His Apostles; but, on the contrary, something in the nature of a seeming *failure* of the evangelical preaching on the earthly globe, for *the nearness of the end* must coincide with the last attempts to make everyone good Christians… Mr. Dostoyevsky introduces too *rose-coloured* a tint into Christianity in this speech. It is an *innovation* in relation to the Church, which expects nothing especially beneficial from humanity in the future…"

However, of one thing the author of *The Demons,* that extraordinary prophecy of the collective Antichrist, cannot be accused: of underestimating the evil in man, and of his capacity for self-destruction. The inventor of Stavrogin and Ivan Karamazov did not look at contemporary Russian society with rose-tinted spectacles. Dostoyevsky's faith in a final harmony before the Antichrist did not blind him to present realities. "Europe is on the eve of a general and dreadful collapse. The ant-hill which has been long in the process

of construction without the Church and Christ (since the Church, having dimmed its ideal, long ago and everywhere reincarnated itself in the state), with a moral principle shaken loose from its foundation, with everything general and absolute lost - this ant-hill, I say, is utterly undermined. The fourth estate is coming, it knocks at the door, and breaks into it, and if it is not opened to it, it will break the door. The fourth estate cares nothing for the former ideals; it rejects every existing law. It will make no compromises, no concessions; buttresses will not save the edifice. Concessions only provoke, but the fourth estate wants everything. There will come to pass something wholly unsuspected. All these parliamentarisms, all civic theories professed at present, all accumulated riches, banks, sciences, Jews - all these will instantly perish without leaving a trace - save the Jews, who even then will find their way out, so that this work will even be to their advantage."

However, Leontiev accuses him also, and still more seriously, of distorting the basic message of the Gospel. Dostoyevsky's "love" or "humaneness" (gumannost') is closer to the "love" and "humaneness" of Georges Sand than that of Christ. Christian love is complex; it calls on people to love, not simply as such, but "in the name of God", "for the sake of Christ". Dostoyevsky's "love", on the other hand, is "simple and 'autonomous'; step by step and thought by thought it can lead to that dry and self-assured utilitarianism, to that epidemic madness of our time, which we can call, using psychiatric language, mania democratica progressiva. The whole point is that we claim *by ourselves*, without the help of God, to be either good or, which is still more mistaken, useful… "True, in all spiritual compositions there is talk of love for people. But in all such books we also find that *the beginning of wisdom* (that is, religious wisdom and the everyday wisdom that *proceeds from it*) is "the fear of God" – a simple, *very simple fear* both of torments beyond the grave and of other punishments, in the form of earthly tortures, sorrows and woes."

However, far from espousing a "dry and self-assured utilitarianism", Dostoyevsky was one of its most biting critics, satirising the rationalist-humanist-utilitarian world-view under the images of "the crystal palace" and "the ant-hill". Nor did he in any way share in *mania democratica progressiva*.

Again, Leontiev rejects Dostoyevsky's call to the intelligentsia to humble themselves before the people. "I don't think that the family, public and in general *personal* in the narrow sense qualities of our simple people would be so worthy of imitation. It is hardly necessary to imitate their dryness in relation to the suffering and the sick, their unmerciful cruelty in anger, their drunkenness, the disposition of so many of them to cunning and even thievery… Humility before the people… is nothing other than *humility before that same Church which Mr. Pobedonostsev advises us to love*."

However, "one must know," wrote Dostoyevsky, "how to segregate the beauty of the Russian peasant from the layers of barbarity that have accumulated over it… Judge the people not by the abominations they so frequently commit, but by those great and sacred things for which, even in their abominations, they constantly yearn. Not all the people are villains; there are true saints, and what saints they are: they are radiant and illuminate the way for all!… Do not judge the People by what they are, but by what they would like to become."

"I know that our educated men ridicule me: they refuse even to recognize 'this idea' in the people, pointing to their sins and abominations (for which these men themselves are responsible, having oppressed the people for two centuries); they also emphasize the people's prejudices, their alleged indifference to religion, while some of them imagine that the Russian people are simply atheists. Their great error consists of the fact that they refuse to recognize the existence of the Church as an element in the life of the people. I am not speaking about church buildings, or the clergy. I am now referring to our Russian 'socialism', the ultimate aim of which is the establishment of an oecumenical Church on earth in so far as the earth is capable of embracing it. I am speaking of the unquenchable, inherent thirst in the Russian people for great, universal, brotherly fellowship in the name of Christ. And even if this fellowship, as yet, does not exist, and if that church has not completely materialized, - not in prayers only but in reality – nevertheless the instinct for it and the unquenchable, oftentimes unconscious thirst for it, indubitably dwells in the hearts of the millions of our people.

"Not in communism, not in mechanical forms is the socialism of the Russian people expressed: they believe that they shall be finally saved *through the universal communion in the name of Christ*. This is our Russian socialism! It is the presence in the Russian people of this sublime unifying 'church' idea that you, our European gentlemen, are ridiculing."

So Dostoyevsky's "theology" was by no means as unecclesiastical as Leontiev and Pobedonostsev thought. The idea of universal communion in the name of Christ may be considered utopian by some, but it is not heretical. And even if some of his phrases were not strictly accurate as ecclesiological theses, it is quite clear that the concepts of "Church" and "people" were much more closely linked in his mind than Leontiev and Pobedonostev gave him credit for. Indeed, according to Vladimir Soloviev, on a journey to Optina in June, 1878, Dostoyevsky discussed with him his plans for his new novel, *The Brothers Karamazov,* and "the Church as a positive social ideal was to constitute the central idea of the new novel or series of novels".

In some ways, in fact, Dostoyevsky was more inoculated against

Westernism than Leontiev. Thus Leontiev complained to his friend Vasily Rozanov that Dostoyevsky's views on Papism were too severe. And he was so fixated on the evils of liberalism and cosmopolitanism that he could be called an ecumenist in relation to medieval and contemporary Papism – an error that Dostoyevsky was not prone to. Thus Fr. Georges Florovsky points out that "of particular importance was the fact that Dostoyevsky reduced all his searching for vital righteousness to the reality of the Church. In his dialectics of living images (rather than only ideas), the reality of *sobornost'* becomes especially evident… Constantine Leontiev sharply accused Dostoyevsky of preaching a new, 'rose-coloured' Christianity (with reference to his Pushkin speech). 'All these hopes on earthly love and on earthly peace one can find in the songs of Béranger, and still more in Georges Sand many others. And in this connection not only the name of God, but even the name of Christ was mentioned more than once in the West.'… It is true, in his religious development Dostoyevsky proceeded precisely from these impressions and names mentioned by Leontiev. And he never renounced this 'humanism' later because, with all its ambiguity and insufficiency, he divined in it the possibility of becoming truly Christian, and strove to enchurch (*otserkovit'*) them. Dostoyevsky saw only insufficiency where Leontiev found the complete opposite…"

Dostoyevsky started where his audience were – outside the Church, in the morass of westernism, and tried to build on what was still not completely corrupted in that world-view in order to draw his audience closer to Christ. In this way, he imitated St. Paul in Athens, who, seeing an altar with the inscription "TO THE UNKNOWN GOD", gave the Athenians the benefit of the doubt, as it were, and proceeded to declare: "He Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you" (Acts 17.23). Leontiev would perhaps have objected that the Athenians, as pagans, were certainly not worshipping the True God at this altar. And he would have been right… And yet St. Paul saw the germ of true worship in this inchoate paganism, and, building upon it, led at any rate a few to the truth. This was also the method of Dostoyevsky with his semi-pagan Russian audience. And he, too, made some converts…

Again, if Dostoyevsky emphasised certain aspects of the Christian teaching such as compassionate love and humility more than others such as the fear of God, fasting, sacraments, obedience to authorities, this is not because he did not think the latter were important, but because he knew that his audience, being spiritually infants, could not take this "hard" food, but had to begin on the "milk" of those teachings which were not so distasteful to their spoilt palates. And the results proved him right from a pragmatic, missionary point of view. For the unbelieving intelligentsia of several subsequent generations have been stimulated to question their unbelief far more by the writings of Dostoyevsky than by those of Leontiev and Pobedonostev, undoubtedly Orthodox though the latter are.

V.M. Lourié has developed Leontiev's line of criticism. From Dostoyevsky's remarks about "that rapture which most of all binds us to [God]", he concludes that "'deification' is interpreted as a psychological and even natural condition – a relationship of man to Christ, in Whom he believes as God. From such 'deification' there does not and cannot follow the deification of man himself. On the contrary, man remains as he was, 'on his own', and with his own psychology… In such an – unOrthodox – soteriological perspective, the patristic 'God became man, so that man should become God' is inevitably exchanged for something like 'God became man, so that man should become a good man'; ascetic sobriety turns out to be simply inadmissible, and it has to be squeezed out by various means of eliciting 'that rapture'."

And yet what is more significant: the fact that there is a certain inaccuracy in Dostoyevsky's words from a strictly theological point of view, or the fact that Dostoyevsky talks about deification at all as the ultimate end of man? Surely the latter… Even among the Holy Fathers we find inaccuracies, and if Lourié is right (in his more theological works), the Palamite ideas of uncreated grace and the deification of man through grace had almost been lost even among the monasteries and academies of nineteenth-century Russia. This makes Dostoyevsky's achievement in at least placing the germs of such thoughts in the mind of the intelligentsia, all the greater. For in what other non-monastic Russian writer of the nineteenth century do we find such a vivid, profound and above all *relevant* (to the contemporary spiritual state of his listeners) analysis of the absolute difference between becoming "god" through the assertion of self (Kirillov, Ivan Karamazov) and becoming god through self-sacrificial love and humility (Bishop Tikhon, Elder Zosima)?

Leontiev also asserted (followed by Lourié) that Dostoyevsky's monastic types are not true depictions of monastic holiness. "In his memoirs, Leontiev wrote: '*The Brothers Karamazov* can be considered an Orthodox novel only by those who are little acquainted with true Orthodoxy, with the Christianity of the Holy Fathers and the Elders of Athos and Optina.' In Leontiev's view (he himself became an Orthodox monk and lived at Optina for the last six months of his life), the work of Zola (in *La Faute de l'abbé Mouret*) is 'far closer to the spirit of true personal monkhood than the superficial and sentimental inventions of Dostoyevsky in *The Brothers Karamazov*.'"

There is some truth in this criticism, and yet it misses more than one important point. The first is that Dostoyevsky was not intending to make a literal representation of anyone, but "an artistic tableau". And for that reason, as he wrote to Pobedonostsev in August, 1879, he was worried whether he would be understood. The "obligations of artistry… required that I present a

modest and majestic figure, whereas life is full of the comic and is majestic only in its inner sense, so that in the biography of my monk I was involuntarily compelled by artistic demands to touch upon even the most vulgar aspects so as not to infringe artistic realism. Then, too, there are several teachings of the monk against which people will simply cry out that they are absurd, for they are all too ecstatic; of course, they are absurd in an everyday sense, but in another, inward sense, I think they are true."

Again, as Fr. Georges Florovsky writes: "To the 'synthetic' Christianity of Dostoyevsky Leontiev opposed the contemporary monastic way of life or ethos, especially on Athos. And he insisted that in Optina *The Brothers Karamazov* was not recognized as 'a correct Orthodox composition', while Elder Zosima did not correspond to the contemporary monastic spirit. In his time Rozanov made a very true comment on this score. 'If it does not correspond to the type of Russian monasticism of the 18th-19th centuries (the words of Leontiev), then perhaps, and even probably, it corresponded to the type of monasticism of the 4th to 6th centuries'. In any case, Dostoyevsky was truly closer to Chrysostom (and precisely in his social teachings) than Leontiev… Rozanov adds: 'The whole of Russia read *The Brothers Karamazov*, and believed in the representation of the Elder Zosima. "The Russian Monk" (Dostoyevsky's term) appeared as a close and fascinating figure in the eyes of the whole of Russia, even her unbelieving parts.'… Now we know that the Elder Zosima was not drawn from nature, and in this case Dostoyevsky did not draw on Optina figures. It was an 'ideal' or 'idealised' portrait, written most of all from Tikhon of Zadonsk, and it was precisely Tikhon's works that inspired Dostoyevsky, constituting the 'teachings' of Zosima… By the power of his artistic clairvoyance Dostoyevsky divined and recognized this seraphic stream in Russian piety, and prophetically continued the dotted line."

24. THE TSAR AND THE CONSTITUTION

The creation of the *zemstva*, which had given the nobility a taste of administration, stimulated demands for the introduction of a constitutional monarchy. The initiative came from the Moscow nobility, who in 1865, as Ivanov writes, "agitated for the convening of the people's representatives, thanking the Tsar for his wise beginnings. The Moscow nobility, who always strove for the good of the State, asked him not to stop on his chosen path and bring to completion the state building begun by him '*through the convening of a general assembly of elected delegates from the Russian land for the discussion of the needs that are common to the whole state*'. Emperor Alexander did not accept this appeal. He underlined that 'not one assembly can speak in the name of the other classes' and that the right to care for what is useful and beneficial for the State belonged to him as emperor.

"Alexander thought and wisely foresaw that the granting of a constitution for Russia would be disastrous for the latter.

"In a private conversation with one of the composers of the appeal (Golokhvostov), Alexander said: 'What do you want? A constitutional form of administration? I give you my word, at this table, that I would be ready to sign any constitution you like if I were convinced that it was useful for Russia. *But I know that if I do this today, tomorrow Russia will disintegrate into pieces.*'

"The Tsar's forebodings had solid foundations.

"On April 4, 1868 Karakozov made an attempt on the life of the Tsar.

"They had to speak, not about a constitution, but about the State's salvation…"

Some years before, as Dominic Lieven writes, Alexander had "explained to Otto von Bismarck, who was then Prussian minister in Petersburg, that 'the idea of taking counsel of subjects other than officials was not in itself objectionable and that great participation by respectable notables in official business could only be advantageous. The difficulty, if not impossibility, of putting this principle into effect lay only in the experience of history that it had never been possible to stop a country's liberal development at the point beyond which it should not go. This would be particularly difficult in Russia, where the necessary political culture, thoughtfulness and circumspection were only to be found in relatively small circles. Russia must not be judged by Petersburg, of all the empire's towns the least Russian one… The revolutionary party would not find it easy to corrupt the people's convictions and make the masses conceive their interests to be divorced from those of the

dynasty. The Emperor continued that 'throughout the interior of the empire the people still see the monarch as the paternal and absolute Lord set by God over the land; this belief, which has almost the force of a religious sentiment, is completely independent of any personal loyalty of which I could be the object. I like to think that it will not be lacking too in the future. To abdicate the absolute power with which my crown is invested would be to undermine the aura of that authority which has dominion over the nation. The deep respect, based on innate sentiment, with which right up to now the Russian people surrounds the throne of its Emperor cannot be parcelled out. I would diminish without any compensation the authority of the government if I wanted to allow representatives of the nobility or the nation to participate in it. Above all, God knows what would become of relations between the peasants and the lords if the authority of the Emperor was not still sufficiently intact to exercise the dominating influence.'…

"… After listening to Alexander's words Bismarck commented that if the masses lost faith in the crown's absolute power the rise of a murderous peasant war would become very great. He concluded that 'His Majesty can still rely on the common man both in the army and among the civilian masses but the "educated classes", with the exception of the older generation, are stoking the fires of a revolution which, if it comes to power, would immediately turn against themselves.' Events were to show that this prophecy was as relevant in Nicholas II's era as it had been during the reign of his grandfather…"

The revolutionaries did not rest. In 1876 in London, the Jewish revolutionaries Liberman, Goldenburg and Zuckerman worked out a plan for the murder of the Tsar. Goldenburg was the first to offer his services as the murderer, but his suggestion was refused, "since they found that he, as a Jew, should not take upon himself this deed, for then it would not have the significance that was fitting for society and, the main thing, the people." On May 28, 1879 Soloviev was hanged for attempting to kill the Tsar. Three weeks later a secret congress of revolutionaries of the Land and Freedom sect in Lipetsk took the decision to kill the Tsar. Further attempts were made to kill the Tsar in November, 1879 and 1880.

In February, 1880, on the insistence of the Tsarevich, the future Tsar Alexander III, a "Supreme Investigative Commission" was founded and the Armenian Count Loris-Melikov was given dictatorial powers.

Loris-Melikov entered into close relations with the *zemstva* and the liberal press and suggested the project for the participation of some *zemstvo* members in the State Council that received the name of "the constitution of Loris-Melikov" in society. The former revolutionary Lev Tikhomirov declared that

Loris-Melikov was deceiving the Tsar and creating a revolutionary leaven in the country at the same time that he was in charge of detecting and suppressing the revolutionaries.

The Tsar confirmed Loris-Melikov's report on February 17, 1881, and on the morning of March 1 he also confirmed the text announcing this measure, allowing it to be debated at the session of the Council of Ministers on March 4. Russia was on the verge of becoming a constitutional monarchy…

On March 1, 1881, in broad daylight, a bomb was thrown at the Tsar's carriage. It injured some of the guards but left him unhurt. Disregarding his personal safety, he left his carriage and was attending to the injured when a second bomb was thrown, fatally wounding him and many others. He was rushed to the Winter Palace where he died in the presence of his grief-stricken family. Both his son and heir, the future Tsar Alexander III, and his grandson, the future Tsar Nicholas II, were present.

PART III. REACTION (1881- 1894)

The mystery of iniquity is already at work.
II Thessalonians 2.7.

25. THE REIGN OF TSAR ALEXANDER III

"The murder of Alexander II," writes G.P. Izmestieva, "was seen by monarchical Russia as the culmination of the liberal 'inebriation' of earlier years, as the shame and guilt of all, God's judgement and a warning." As St. Ambrose of Optina wrote on March 14: "I don't know what to write to you about the terrible present times and the pitiful state of affairs in Russia. There is one consolation in the prophetic words of St. David: 'The Lord allowed Alexander II to die a martyric death, but He is powerful to give help from on high to Alexander III to catch the evildoers, who are infected with the spirit of the Antichrist. Since apostolic times the spirit of the Antichrist has worked through his forerunners, as the apostle writes: 'The mystery of iniquity is already working, only it is held back now, until it is removed from the midst' (II Thessalonians 2.7). The apostolic words 'is held back now' refer to the powers that be and the ecclesiastical authorities, against which the forerunners of the Antichrist rise up in order to abolish and annihilate them upon the earth. Because the Antichrist, according to the explanation of the interpreters of Holy Scripture, must come during a time of anarchy on earth. But until then he sits in the bottom of hell, and acts through his forerunners. First he acted through various heretics who disturbed the Orthodox Church, and especially through the evil Arians, educated men and courtiers; and then he acted cunningly through the educated Masons; and finally, now, through the educated nihilists, he has begun to act blatantly and crudely, beyond measure. But their illness will turn back upon their heads, as it is written in the Scriptures. Is it not the most extreme madness to work with all one's might, not sparing one's own life, in order to be hung on the gallows, and in the future life to fall into the bottom of hell to be tormented forever in Tartarus? But desperate pride pays no attention, but desires in every way to express its irrational boldness. Lord, have mercy on us!"

Not only the elders saw in Russia the main obstacle to the triumph of evil. "The same withholding role in Russia," writes Mikhail Nazarov, "was seen by the founders of Marxism: '… It is clear to us that the revolution has only one truly terrible enemy – Russia'; the role of Russia is 'the role predestined from on high of the saviour of order'. In those years Marx wrote in the *New Rhine Newspaper* (the organ of the 'League of Communists'): 'Russia has become a colossus which does not cease to elicit amazement. Russia is the one phenomenon of its kind in history: the terrible power of this huge Empire… on a world scale'. 'In Russia, in this despotic government, in this barbaric race, there is such energy and activity as one would look for in vain in the monarchies of the older States'. 'The Slavic barbarians are innate counter-revolutionaries', 'particular enemies of democracy'.

"Engels echoed Marx: what was necessary was 'a pitiless struggle to the

death with Slavdom, which has betrayed and has a turncoat attitude towards the revolution… a war of destruction and unrestrained terror'. 'A general war will pay back the Slavic barbarians with a bloody revenge.' 'Yes, the world war that is to come will sweep off the face of the earth not only the reactionary classes and dynasties, but also whole reactionary peoples – and this will be progress!'"

The elders saw signs of the coming Antichrist not only in specific acts of terrorism, such as the murder of Alexander II, but also in the general weakening and softening of the power of the Orthodox Autocracy. Thus Constantine Leontiev, a disciple of Elder Ambrose of Optina, wrote: "One great spiritual elder said: 'It is true that morals have become much softer. But on the other hand most people's self-opinion has grown, and pride has increased. They no longer like to submit to any authorities, whether spiritual or secular: they just don't want to. The gradual weakening and abolition of the authorities is a sign of the approach of the kingdom of the antichrist and the end of the world. It is impossible to substitute only a softening of morals for Christianity.'"

But, as St. John (Maximovich) of Shanghai and San Francisco wrote: "Alexander II's murder unleashed a storm of indignation in Russia, which helped strengthen the moral fibre of the people, as became evident during the reign of Alexander III…"

Now "after the period of the great reforms," writes S.S. Oldenburg, "and after the war of 1877-78, that huge exertion of Russian strength in the interests of Balkan Slavdom, Russia needed a breathing-space. She had to assimilate and 'digest' the movements that had taken place." This is what the reign of Tsar Alexander III provided above all…

The conservative views of such men as his former tutor and the over-procurator of the Holy Synod, Constantine Petrovich Pobedonostsev, were protected and nurtured during the 1880s by the Tsar, who quietly reversed the main direction of his father's reforms. Once he received a letter from "The People's Will" calling on him to give "a general amnesty for all political crimes of the past", and "to summon representatives from the whole of the Russian people to review the existing forms of state and social life and reconstruct them in accordance with the people's desires".

As if in answer to this letter, the tsar, in his manifesto, "On the Unshakeableness of the Autocracy", of April 29, 1881, wrote: "We call on all our faithful subjects to serve us and the state in faith and righteousness, to the uprooting of the abominable rebellion that is devastating the Russian land, to the confirmation of faith and morality, to the good education of children, to

the destruction of unrighteousness and theft, to the instilling of order and righteousness in the acts of the institutions given to Russia by her benefactor, our beloved parent."

The novelist Lev Tolstoy, who had now embarked on his new career as an apostle of pacifism and non-violence, also appealed to the Tsar to forgive the murderers of his father. But after reading Tolstoy's letter, the Tsar said: "If the crime had concerned me personally, I should have the right to pardon those who were guilty of it, but I could not pardon them on behalf of my father."

Although the new tsar promised to work within the institutions created by his father, there was no promise of any new ones, let alone a constitution - the project of Leris-Melikov, which Alexander II was about to sign at the time of his death, was quietly dropped. And when his new minister of the interior, Count N.P. Ignatiev, proposed convening a *Zemsky Sobor* before his coronation, the tsar said that he was "too convinced of the ugliness of the electoral representative principle to allow it at any time in Russia in that form in which it exists throughout Europe".

His world-view was expressed in the advice he gave his heir, the Tsarevich Nicholas Alexandrovich: "You are destined to take from my shoulders the heavy burden of State power and bear it to the grave exactly as I have borne it and our ancestors bore it. I hand over to you the kingdom entrusted by God to me. I received it thirteen years ago from my blood-drenched father… Your grandfather from the height of the throne introduced many important reforms directed to the good of the Russian people. As a reward for all this he received a bomb and death from the Russian revolutionaries… On that tragic day the question arose before me: on what path am I to proceed? On that onto which I was being pushed by 'progressive society', infected with the liberal ideas of the West, or that which my own conviction, my higher sacred duty as Sovereign and my conscience indicated to me? I chose my path. The liberals dubbed it reactionary. I was interested only in the good of my people and the greatness of Russia. I strove to introduce internal and external peace, so that the State could freely and peacefully develop, become stronger in a normal way, become richer and prosper.

"The Autocracy created the historical individuality of Russia. If – God forbid! – the Autocracy should fall, then Russia will fall with it. The fall of the age-old Russian power will open up an endless era of troubles and bloody civil conflicts. My covenant to you is to love everything that serves for the good, the honour and the dignity of Russia. Preserve the Autocracy, remembering that you bear responsibility for the destiny of your subjects before the Throne of the Most High. May faith in God and the holiness of your royal duty be for you the foundation of your life. Be firm and

courageous, never show weakness. Hear out everybody, there is nothing shameful in that, but obey only yourself and your conscience. In external politics adopt an independent position. Remember: Russia has no friends. They fear our enormous size. Avoid wars. In internal politics protect the Church first of all. She has saved Russia more than once in times of trouble. Strengthen the family, because it is the foundation of every State."

Tsar Alexander succeeded in most of the tasks he set himself. He avoided war, while gaining the respect of the European rulers – although he was not able to prevent a gradual cooling of relations with Germany. He suppressed the revolution, giving emergency powers to local governors in troubled areas, and checked the power of the *zemstva* and the press. He increased the prosperity of all classes. And he strengthened the Orthodox Church and the family.

Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote of him: "He sought neither flashiness nor praise in his actions, but the common good, the most essential righteousness, and in particular mercy towards the poor, to the young, and finally to the servants of the faith, whom the reposed justly considered the highest truth and the main support of the flourishing of the state."

The Tsar was helped by the fact that "the public reacted with horror," as Richard Pipes writes, to the murder of his father, "and the radical cause lost a great deal of popular support. The government responded with a variety of repressive measures and counter-intelligence operations which made it increasingly difficult for the revolutionaries to function. And the 'people' did not stir, unshaken in the belief that the land which they desired would be given them by the next Tsar.

"There followed a decade of revolutionary quiescence. Russians who wanted to work for the common good now adopted the doctrine of 'small deeds' – that is, pragmatic, unspectacular activities to raise the cultural and material level of the population through the *zemstva* and private philanthropic organizations.

"Radicalism began to stir again in the early 1890s in connection with the spurt of Russian industrialization and a severe famine. The Socialists-Revolutionaries of the 1870s had believed that Russia would follow a path of economic development different from the Western because she had neither the domestic nor the foreign markets that capitalism required. The Russian peasantry, being poor and heavily dependent on income from cottage industries (estimated at one-third of the peasant total income), would be ruined by competition from the mechanized factories and lose that little purchasing power it still possessed. As for foreign markets, these had been

pre-empted by the advanced countries of the West. Russia had to combine communal agriculture with rural (cottage) industry. From these premises Socialist-Revolutionary theoreticians developed a 'separate path' doctrine according to which Russian would proceed directly from 'feudalism' to 'socialism' without passing through a capitalist phase.

"This thesis was advanced with the help of arguments drawn from the writings of Marx and Engels. Marx and Engels initially disowned such an interpretation of their doctrine, but they eventually changed their minds, conceding that there might be more than one model of economic development. In 1877, in an exchange with a Russian, Marx rejected the notion that every country had to repeat the economic experience of Western Europe. Should Russia enter the path of capitalist development, he wrote, then, indeed, nothing could save her from its 'iron laws', but this did not mean that Russian could not avoid this path and the misfortunes it brought. A few years later Marx stated that the 'historical inevitability' of capitalism was confined to Western Europe, and that because Russia had managed to preserve the peasant commune into the era of capitalism, the commune could well become the 'fulchrum of Russia's social rejuvenation'. Marx and Engels admired the terrorists of the People's Will, and, as an exception to their general theory, Engels allowed that in Russia the revolution could be made by a 'handful of people'.

"Thus, before a formal 'Marxist' or Social-Democratic movement had emerged in Russia, the theories of its founders were interpreted, with their sanction, when applied to an autocratic regime in an agrarian country, to mean a revolution brought about, not by the inevitable social consequences of matured capitalism, but by terror and coup d'état.

"A few Russians, led by George Plekhanov, dissented from this version of Marxism. They broke with the People's Will, moved to Switzerland, and there immersed themselves in German Social-Democratic literature. From it they concluded that Russia had no alternative but to go through full-blown capitalism. They rejected terrorism and a coup d'état on the grounds that even in the unlikely event that such violence succeeded in bringing down the tsarist regime, the outcome would not be socialism, for which backward Russia lacked both the economic and cultural preconditions, but a 'revived tsarism on a Communist base'.

"From the premises adopted by the Russian Social-Democrats there followed certain political consequences. Capitalist development meant the rise of a bourgeoisie committed, from economic self-interest, to liberalization. It further meant the growth of the industrial 'proletariat', which would be driven by its deteriorating economic situation to socialism, furnishing the

socialist movement with revolutionary cadres. The fact that Russian capitalism developed in a country with a pre-capitalist political system, however, called for a particular revolutionary strategy. Socialism could not flourish in a country held in the iron grip of a police-bureaucratic regime: it required freedom of speech to propagate its ideas and freedom of association to organize its followers. In other words, unlike the German Social-Democrats, who, since 1890, were able to function in the open and run in national elections, Russian Social-Democrats confronted the prior task of overthrowing autocracy.

"The theory of a two-stage revolution, as formulated by Plekhanov's associate, Paul Akselrod, provided for the 'proletariat' (read: socialist intellectuals) collaborating with the bourgeoisie for the common objective of bringing to Russia 'bourgeois democracy'. As soon as that objective had been attained, the socialists would rally the working class for the second, socialist phase of the revolution. From the point of view of this strategy, everything that promoted in Russia the growth of capitalism and the interests of the bourgeoisie was – up to a point – progressive and favourable to the cause of socialism."

These various strands of socialist thinking had little influence in Russia during the reign of Alexander III. And it was not from bomb-throwing *raznochintsy* and peasants that the real threat to the regime came – at this time. The real threat came, not from socialists, but from liberals, and not from the lower classes, but from the nobility who dominated local government.

Oliver Figes explains: "The power of the imperial government effectively stopped at the eighty-nine provincial capitals where the governors had their offices. Below that there was no real state administration to speak of. Neither the *uezd* or district town nor the *volost* or rural townships had any standing government officials. There was only a series of magistrates who would appear from time to time on some specific mission, usually to collect taxes or sort out a local conflict, and then disappear once again. The affairs of peasant Russia, where 85 per cent of the population lived, were entirely unknown to the city bureaucrats. 'We knew as much about the Tula countryside,' confessed Prince Lvov, leader of the Tula *zemstvo* in the 1890s, 'as we knew about Central Africa.'

"The crucial weakness of the tsarist system was the *under-government* of the localities. This vital fact is all too often clouded by the revolutionaries' mythic image of an all-powerful regime. Nothing could be further from the truth. For every 1,000 inhabitants of the Russian Empire there were only 4 state officials at the turn of the century, compared with 7.3 in England and Wales, 12.6 in Germany and 17.6 in France. The regular police, as opposed to the political

branch, was extremely small by European standards. Russia's expenditure on the police per capita of the population was less than half of that in Italy or France and less than one quarter of that in Prussia. For a rural population of 100 million people, Russia in 1900 had no more than 1,852 police sergeants and 6,874 police constables. The average constable was responsible for policing 50,000 people in dozens of settlements stretched across nearly 2000 square miles. Many of them did not even have a horse and cart. True, from 1903 the constables were aided by the peasant constables, some 40,000 of whom were appointed. But these were notoriously unreliable and, in any case, did very little to reduce the mounting burdens on the police. Without its own effective organs in the countryside, the central bureaucracy was assigning more and more tasks to the local police: not just the maintenance of law and order but also the collection of taxes, the implementation of government laws and military decrees, the enforcement of health and safety regulations, the inspection of public roads and buildings, the collection of statistics, and the general supervision of 'public morals' (e.g. making sure that the peasants washed their beards). The police, in short, were being used as a sort of catch-all executive organ. They were often the only agents of the state with whom the peasants ever came into contact.

"Russia's general backwardness – its small tax-base and poor communications – largely accounts for this under-government. The legacy of serfdom also played a part. Until 1861 the serfs had been under the jurisdiction of their noble owners and, provided they paid their taxes, the state did not intervene in the relations between them. Only after the Emancipation – and then very slowly – did the tsarist government come round to the problem of how to extend its influence to its new 'citizens' in the villages and of how to shape a policy to help the development of peasant agriculture.

"Initially, in the 1860s, the regime left the affairs of the country districts in the hands of the local nobles. They dominated the *zemstvo* assemblies and accounted for nearly three-quarters of the provincial *zemstvo* boards. The noble assemblies and their elected marshals were left with broad administrative powers, especially at the district level (*uezd)* where they were virtually the only agents upon whom the tsarist regime could rely. Moreover, the new magistrates (*mirovye posredniki*) were given broad judicial powers, not unlike those of their predecessors under serfdom, including the right to flog the peasants for minor crimes and misdemeanours.

"It was logical for the tsarist regime to seek to base its power in the provinces on the landed nobility, its closest ally. But this was a dangerous strategy, and the danger grew as time went on. The landed nobility was in severe economic decline during the years of agricultural depression in the late

nineteenth century, and was turning to the *zemstvos* to defend its local agrarian interests against the centralizing and industrializing bureaucracy of St. Petersburg. In the years leading up to 1905 this resistance was expressed in mainly liberal terms: it was seen as the defence of 'provincial society', a term which was now used for the first time and consciously broadened to include the interests of the peasantry. This liberal *zemstvo* movement culminated in the political demand for more autonomy for local government, for a national parliament and a constitution. Here was the start of the revolution: not in the socialist or labour movements but – as in France in the 1780s – in the aspirations of the regime's oldest ally, the provincial nobility…"

26. THE JEWS UNDER ALEXANDER III

Now the murder of Tsar Alexander II was carried out by a revolutionary organization called "The People's Will", which consisted mainly of Jews. This fact, in the words of Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "clarified for people who were capable of at any rate some thought that these murders and blasphemies were not at all the expression of the people's will, but on the contrary, a shameful spitting at that will. Moreover, they proceeded not so much from an honourable predilection for false theories as from the hands of the natural enemies of the fatherland – people of another race and nation, who were being rewarded with a corresponding financial payment."

Paradoxically, however, the Jews who joined the revolutionary movement were not religious Jews who believed in the Talmud, but atheists – and their atheism had been taught them in Russian schools by Russian teachers who had abandoned their own, Orthodox faith and adopted the faith of the revolutionary thinkers of the West. However, this distinction was lost on the ordinary people, who suffered in their everyday life from (religious) Jews that exploited and deceived them, and believed that the (atheist) Jews who killed the Tsar must be of the same kind. Moreover, the violence of the act profoundly shocked them; for, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn explains, "that the deaths of the heirs or tsars of the previous century – Alexis Petrovich, Ivan Antonovich, Peter III, Paul – were violent remained unknown to the people. The murder of March 1, 1881 shocked the minds of the whole people. For the masses of the simple people, and especially the peasants, it was as if the foundations of their life were being shaken. But again, as the *narodovoltsy* had calculated, this could not fail to be reflected in some kind of explosion. And it was. But in an unpredictable way: in pogroms against the Jews in New Russia and Ukraine."

On April 15 the first pogrom broke out in Elizavettgrad. It spread to Kiev and Kishinev and Odessa. The government reacted energetically: in Kiev 1400 people were arrested. However, there were not enough policemen for the scale of the disturbances, and "the government recognised that it had been insufficiently active. An official declaration proclaimed that in the Kiev pogrom 'measures to rein in the crowd had not been undertaken quickly and energetically enough'. In June, 1881 the director of the department of police, V.K. Plehve, in his report to the sovereign on the situation in Kiev province named 'as one of the reasons "for the development of the disturbances and their not very speedy suppression" the fact that the military court "'was very condescending to the accused, and very superficial in approaching the affair'. Alexander III commented on the report: 'This is unforgiveable'."

Many western historians have accused the Tsarist government of

complicity in the pogroms. Now Tsar Alexander III did not like the Jews, and he thought that their sufferings were in punishment for their renunciation of Christ and complicity in His murder, in accordance with their words: "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27.25). However, it is a slander to assert that he incited the pogroms. In fact, as the pro-Semite historian David Vital admits, "Alexander did display genuine dismay and dissatisfaction when reports of the weak and ineffective conduct of the security forces were brought to him; and fury when he learned of cases of military officers and men having actually joined the mob. *His* instructions were to deal firmly with rioters, to see to it that their leaders were severely flogged; and to make clear to the civil and military authorities alike that their business was to restore and maintain order before all else…. All in all then, while much was murky in official Russia at this time, the grounds for positing a momentarily disoriented, intrinsically inefficacious government not so much stimulating as failing to cope with simmering, popular, generalized discontent seem solid enough."

Again, Dominic Lieven writes: "… The pogroms were terrible but they were a long way from the systematic ethnic cleansing, let alone genocide, of whole peoples which were to be the strategies of supposedly more civilized European people towards the Jews. Moreover, all recent research emphasizes that the tsarist central government itself did not organize or instigate pogroms, though local authorities sometimes winked at them and more often were slow to stamp on them. Tsarist ministers did not connive in murder and were in any case deeply uneasy at outbreaks of mass violence and very scared that the 'dark people's' uncontrollable propensity for anarchic settling of scores might easily target the ruling classes themselves. On the other hand, it is the case that knowledge of their superiors' frequent antipathy to the Jews could encourage junior officials to believe that failure to stop pogroms could go unpunished…"

"The reasons for the pogroms were earnestly investigated and discussed by contemporaries. Already in 1872, after the Odessa pogrom, the governor-general of the South-Western region had warned in a report that such an event could happen again in his region, for 'here hatred and enmity towards the Jews is rooted in history and only the material dependence of the peasants on them at the present, together with the administration's measures, holds back an explosion of discontent in the Russian population against the Jewish race'. The governor-general reduced the essence of the matter to economics: 'I have counted and estimated the commercial-industrial property belonging to the Jews in the South-Western region, and at the same time have pointed to the fact that the Jews, having taken eagerly to the renting of landowners' lands, have leased them out again to the peasants on very onerous terms'. And this causal nexus 'was generally recognised in the pogrom years of 1881'.

"In the spring of 1881 Loris-Melikov had also reported to the Sovereign: 'At the root of the present disturbances lies the profound hatred of the local population for the Jews who have enslaved them. But this has undoubtedly been used by evil-minded people.'"

This was true: the "evil-minded" revolutionaries, both Russian and Jewish, used the hatred to their own ends. And yet it is little wonder that conservative opinion, while deploring the pogroms, saw the root cause of the Jews' problems in the Jews themselves, in their economic exploitation of the peasants. When Loris-Melikov was succeeded in 1881 by Count N.P. Ignatiev, the latter, on the instructions of the emperor, sent him a memorandum on the causes of the pogroms. In it, writes Sir Geoffrey Hosking, he outlined "his fears about domination by 'alien forces'. In it he linked the whole Westernizing trend with the Jews and the Poles… 'In Petersburg there exists a powerful Polish-Jewish group in whose hands are directly concentrated, the stock exchange, the a*dvokatura*, a good part of the press and other public affairs. In many legal and illegal ways they enjoy immense influence on officialdom and on the course of affairs in general.' They used this influence to mould public opinion in the interests of their favourite schemes: 'the broadest possible rights for Poles and Jews, and representative institutions on the western model. Every honest voice from the Russian land is drowned out by Polish-Jewish clamours that one must only listen to the 'intelligentsia' and that Russian demands should be rejected as old-fashioned and unenlightened.'"

Among the most important causes of the pogroms, write M. and Yu. Krivoshein, Ignatiev "mentioned the changed economic condition of the peasants after the reform of 1861: having become personally free, but unskilled in financial operations, the peasants gradually fell into dependence on the local Jewish usurers and, in this way, peasant gardens, lands, cattle, etc. began to pass over to the latter. Explosions of popular anger followed.

"In his turn the very prominent banker Baron G.O. Ginzburg interceded before the emperor for the usurers who had been beaten up by the peasants, imploring him not to allow repressions against his co-religionists. The banker's reply was Count N.P. Ignatiev's speech in the name of Alexander III before a deputation of Jewish society:

"… 'Your situation is not comforting, but it depends to a great extent on you to correct it. Living amidst a population that is foreign to you, you have drawn upon yourselves such hatred that for several months I was forced to apply force merely to protect you. Investigations have by no means confirmed your favourite ploy, that they are attacking you as proprietors. Still less can

what has happened in the south be ascribed to religious intolerance. The Russian people, like the state, is very tolerant in matters of faith – it takes a lot to draw it out of its tolerance. In the East there live many people of other races amidst the Russian population who are not Christians. However, it is not necessary to employ armies there in order to defend them.

"'While being profoundly sorrowful over the disorders that have taken place, and doing everything that depends on me to prevent them in the future, I warn you that I will not act in a one-sided manner. On reviewing the causes of the disorders, and having studied their details, it is impossible not to recognize that in many cases they have been elicited by the Jews themselves; lengthy cohabitation with the Jews has rooted the conviction in the local population that there is no law which the Jew would not be able to bypass.

"'One can rely on the bayonet, but one cannot sit on it. Remember that you are being protected, but that it is impossible to tolerate a situation in which it is constantly necessary to protect the Jews from the consequences of popular anger. Try to search out for yourselves productive occupations, labouring with your own hands, abandon tavern-keeping and usury… I am willing and ready to assist you in everything that can accelerate your transition to agricultural, craft and factory work, but of course you will find in me a very powerful opponent if you, under the guise of crafts and other productive occupations, develop throughout the provinces of Russia the trades that you usually practise now.

"'I will end the way I began: as long as you keep your *kahal* organization, your cohesion and your striving to take everything into your hands, while violating the laws of the country, you will in no way be able to count on privileges and a broadening of your rights or places of settlement, which will create fresh complications…'"

Ignatiev's reference to the *kahal* organization was especially emphasized by religious leaders, such as Archbishop Nicanor of Odessa and Kherson: "Religion is the basis of the powerful Jewish spirit. The more or less secret-open religious organisation of the *kahal* is that mighty, many-cylindered machine which moves the millions of Jews to secretly planned ends. Only a blind man could not see how terrible and threatening is this power! It is striving for nothing less than the enslavement of the world!… In the last century it has had horrific successes by relying on European liberalism, on equality before the law, etc. It is mixing up people of other faiths more and more closely, while it rules its own people like a machine. All the Jews are in essence like one man. We reason in a liberal way whether it is useful or harmful to ban bazaars on feast-days. But the secret Jewish power says to its own people: 'Don't you dare! Honour the Sabbath! Honour the law of your

fathers! The law gives life and power to Jewry!' And look: not a single Jew dares to go out on Saturday from Nikolaev to Kherson or Odessa. The railway trains are empty, while the steamer services between these great cities stop completely. It is strange and offensive for the Christian people and such a great Kingdom as ours! But what a foreign power! And how bold and decisive it is. This is a religious power coming from the religious organisation of the *kahal*."

Of course, the *kahal*, that "state within a state", was supposed to have been abolished in the reign of Nicholas I. Evidently, as in so many other ways, the Jews had managed to get round that law…

In May, 1882 the government issued new "temporary rules" which "forbade Jews to resettle or acquire property in rural areas, even within the Pale, while outside it the police were instructed to enforce restrictions on Jewish residence which had previously been widely flouted. In the following years Jews were barred from entering the *advokatura* and the military-medical professions, while a *numerus clausus* was imposed on their admission to secondary and higher education in general. They were also denied the vote in *zemstvo* and municipal elections. In 1891, at Passover, there was a mass expulsion of illegal resident Jews from Moscow, which deprived the city of two-thirds of its Jewish population."

The Jewish radicals of the previous reign had seen themselves as *joining* Russian culture, whose famous writers had been their idols. Unfortunately, however, the pogroms served to radicalize Jewish youth in an opposite direction. So their radicalism was now nationalist rather than internationalist, and anti-Russian rather than pro-Russian.

As Solzhenitsyn writes: "The general turning-point in Jewish consciousness in Russia after 1881-82 could not fail, of course, to be reflected to some extent also in the consciousness of the Jewish revolutionaries in Russia. These youths had first left Jewry, but afterwards many returned, 'the departure from "Jew street" and return to the people', 'our historical destiny is bound up with the Jewish ghetto, and from it comes our national essence'. Until the pogroms of 1881-82 'it absolutely never entered the head of any of us revolutionaries to think about the necessity' of publicly explaining the role of the Jews in the revolutionary movement. But the pogroms elicited 'amongst… the majority of my compatriots an explosion of discontent'. And so 'not only the *intelligent* Jews in general, but also some revolutionary Jews, who previously had felt not the slightest bond with their nationality… suddenly recognised themselves as obliged to devote their strength and abilities to their unjustly persecuted compatriots'. 'The pogroms brought out previously hidden feelings and made the youth more sensitive to the

sufferings of their people, and the people more receptive to revolutionary ideas."

And yet there is reason to believe that the great wave of Jewish emigration from Russia to the West in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – about two million Jews emigrated to America alone before 1914 - was not elicited primarily by the pogroms. A more important factor, probably, was the introduction of a state monopoly on the sale of alcohol in 1896.

Solzhenitsyn writes: "There is no doubt about it: the introduction of the state wine monopoly turned out to be a very powerful blow at the economy of Russian Jewry. And right up to the World War itself, when it more or less came to an end, the state wine monopoly continued to be a favourite target of public displeasure – although only it introduced strict control over the quality of the spirits sold in the country and their purity. And although the state monopoly also removed the livelihood of Christian publicans.., it was nevertheless made out to be primarily an anti-Jewish measure: 'The introduction of the state sale of wines in the Pale of Settlement at the end of the 90s deprived more than 100,000 Jews of their livelihood', 'the authorities counted on pushing the Jews out of their village localities', and from that time 'trade in alcohol did not have its former significance for the Jews'.

"And it is precisely from the end of the 19th century that the emigration of Jews from Russia intensified. Its statistical link with the introduction of the state sale of wines has not been established, but these 100,000 lost livelihoods point to it. In any case, the Jewish emigration (to America) did not increase substantially until 1886-87, jumped for a short time in 1891-92, and its long and massive rise began in 1897…"

However, other means of exploiting the Christian peasantry remained. 18% of the Jews before the revolution, about one million people, were occupied in the sale of bread. And sometimes they would hoard the harvest and refuse to sell it so that the prices should fall. "It is not by accident that in the 90s of the nineteenth century *agricultural cooperatives* (under the leadership of Count Haydn and Bekhteev) arose for the first time in Russia, forestalling Europe, in the southern provinces. [This was envisaged] as a counter-measure to this essentially completely monopolistic hoarding of peasant bread."

The Jews were also heavily involved in the lumber, sugar, gold, oil and banking industries. And by 1900 they controlled one-third of the trade of Russia. With such a heavy involvement in the country's economy, it is not surprising to learn that, of those Jews who emigrated between 1899 and 1907, only one per cent were educated. The educated had no reason to leave: there were plenty of opportunities for them in Tsarist Russia. We might also have

expected that those who remained would be gradually assimilated. But no: the Jews chose emancipation (education), but not assimilation. They fought for equality of rights, but without the loss of their Jewishness.

"From the beginning of the century a 'Bureau for the Defence' of the Jews in Russia was organized from prominent lawyers and publicists…

"In these years 'the Jewish spirit was roused to struggle', and in many Jews there was 'a rapid growth in social and national self-consciousness' – but national self-consciousness no longer in a religious form: with the 'impoverishment at the local level, the flight of the more prosperous elements… among the youth into the cities… and the tendency to urbanization', religion was undermined 'among the broad masses of Jewry' from the 90s, the authority of the rabbinate fell, and even the yeshbotniks were drawn into secularization. (But in spite of that, in many biographies in the Russian Jewish Encyclopaedia were read about the generation that grew up on the cusp of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries: 'he received a traditional Jewish religious education'.)

"However, as we have seen, *Palestinophilia* began to develop in an unexpected form and with a strength that was unexpected for many…"

"Anti-Jewish manifestations - both abroad and in Russia – were being passionately discussed already in 1884 by Vladimir Soloviev, who was disturbed by them: 'The Jews have always treated us in a Jewish way; but we Christians, by contrast, have not yet learned to treat Judaism in a Christian way'; 'with regard to Judaism the Christian world *in its majority* has so far displayed either zeal not according to reason or a decrepit and powerless indifferentism'. No, 'Christian Europe does not tolerate the Jews – unbelieving Europe does'.

"Russian society felt the growing importance of the Jewish question for Russia as much as half a century after the government. Only after the Crimean war did 'embryonic Russian public opinion begin to become conscious of the presence of the Jewish problem in Russia'. But several decades would have to pass before the *primary importance* of this question was recognized. 'Providence implanted the largest and strongest part of Jewry in our fatherland,' wrote Vladimir Soloviev in 1891.

"But a year earlier, in 1890, Soloviev, finding incitement and support in a circle of sympathizers, composed the text of a 'Protest'. 'The only reason for the so-called Jewish question' was 'forgetfulness of justice and love of man', 'a mindless attraction to blind national egoism'. – 'The incitement of tribal and religious enmity, which is so counter to the spirit of Christianity… radically

corrupts society and can lead to moral savagery…' – 'It is necessary decisively to condemn the anti-Semitic movement' – 'already from the single feeling of national self-preservation'.

"S.M. Dubnov recounts how Soloviev collected more than a hundred signatures, including those of Lev Tolstoy and Korolenko. But the editors of all the newspapers received a warning: don't publish this protest. Soloviev 'addressed Alexander III with an ardent letter'. However, he was warned through the police that if he insisted he would be administratively persecuted. And he abandoned the idea.

"As in Europe, the many-faceted growth of Jewish strivings could not fail to elicit in Russian society – alarm in some, sharp opposition in others, but sympathy in yet others…

"And in others – a political calculation. Just as in 1881 the People's Will revolutionaries had thought of the usefulness of playing on the Jewish question…, so, some time later, the Russian liberal-radical circles, the left wing of society, appropriated for a long time the usefulness of using the Jewish question as a weighty political card in the struggle with the autocracy: they tried in every way to re-iterate the idea that it was impossible to attain equality of rights for the Jews in Russia in any other way than by the complete overthrow of the autocracy. Everyone, from the liberals to the SRs and Bolsheviks, brought in the Jews again and again – some with sincere sympathy, but all as a useful card in the anti-autocratic front. And this card, without a twinge of conscience, was never let out of the hands of the revolutionaries, but was used right up to 1917…"

27. RUSSIA AND THE BALKANS

For both religious and historical reasons, Russia could never remain indifferent to, or detached from, events inl the Balkans. In the tenth century Russia received her Orthodox faith from the Greeks of the New Rome of Constantinople, with powerful support from the Serbs and Bulgars. For nearly five hundred years, until the council of Florence in 1438-39 and the fall of Constantinople in 1453, the rulers of Russia, although *de facto* independent of, and much more powerful than, the Byzantine Emperor, considered themselves *de jure* only junior partners of the Emperor, while the huge Russian Church remained only a single metropolitan district of the Ecumenical Patriarchate. After the fall of Constantinople, the Balkan Slavs and Greeks looked to the Russians as potential liberators from the Turkish yoke, and in 1562 Tsar Ivan IV received a *gramota* from the Ecumenical Patriarch Joasaph calling him "*our* Tsar", ascribing to him authority over "Orthodox Christians in the entire universe", and applying to him the same epithets, "pious, God-crowned and Christ-loving" as had been applied to the Byzantine Emperors. Moscow "the Third Rome" been born…

The idea of the Third Rome has been subjected to much mockery and revilement as if it were just an excuse for nationalist ambition. But exactly the reverse is true: in acknowledging themselves to be the successors of the Byzantines, "the Second Rome", the Russians took upon themselves an *internationalist obligation*: to fight for the protection of all Orthodox Christians throughout the inhabited world. This involved, on the one hand, defensive wars against aggressive powers that invaded her territory from the west, such as the Swedes, the Germans, the Poles and the French. On the other hand, since most non-Russian Orthodox lived within, or within the orbit of, the major Muslim powers of Ottoman Turkey and Persia, it also involved almost continuous war along her southern frontiers and, in some cases – Georgia, for example - the annexation of the threatened Orthodox land in order to protect it from the Muslims. In all cases, it involved the shedding of Russians' blood for their fellow Orthodox Christians with no real gain for Russia, as in the liberation of Bulgaria from the Turks in 1877. To a large extent the history of Russia from the fifteenth century onwards can be seen as a slow, painful but inexorable advance to the fulfillment of the ideal of Christian Rome: the liberation of all fellow Orthodox Christians living under the yoke of heretical or pagan rulers.

The cost was enormous. It has been calculated that, quite apart from losses in terms of men killed, Russians taken into slavery by the Turks from the 15th to the 18th century inclusive numbered between three and five million, while the population of the whole of Russia in the time of Ivan the Terrible (16th

century) numbered less than five million souls. And yet losses of men killed or driven into slavery abroad were only the beginning of the cost. Both the institution of serfdom, which so upset the liberals, and that of military service from youth until (virtually) death, were the results, not of the despotic cruelty of the tsars, but of sheer military necessity...

If the western nations' cynical attitude to Russian expansion was only to be expected, it was less to be expected, and harder to take, from the very Balkan Orthodox who benefited from this expansion through the gradual weakening of Ottoman power. None of them saw in Russia "the Third Rome", and so none of them felt obliged to coordinate their political and military initiatives with Russia, as the leader of the Orthodox world. Paradoxically, this was especially the case after the Russian advance to the gates of Constantinople and the Congress of Berlin in 1878, whose results, while in general galling to the Orthodox, and especially to Russia and Bulgaria, nevertheless established Serbia and Romania as independent states with increased territories.

The main problem with the Treaty of Berlin from the point of view of the Balkan Orthodox was that Austria-Hungary gained a protectorate in Bosnia, which infuriated the Serbs, and greater influence in the region as a whole. The Hungarian Foreign Minister, Count Julius Andrassy, was fearful of Russia and had already tried, in earlier years, to draw Serbia away from the Russian sphere of influence. Now he employed bribery – the offer of increased territory for Serbia in the south-east, at Bulgaria's expense, - to draw Serbia into dependence on Austria.

As Ian Armour writes, Andrassy "would only promote Serbia's territorial claims at the Congress if [the Serbian Prime Minister] Ristic accepted his conditions. These were formalised in a preliminary convention on July 8th, 1878: Serbia agreed to complete a railway line to its southern frontier within three years; and to conclude a commercial treaty with the Monarchy.

"The realisation of these goals took somewhat longer. The railway treaty, for instance, came a year and a half later, largely because Ristic had to overcome heavy opposition in the national assembly. This was due to the understandable fear that, if Serbia were connected by rail to Austria-Hungary in advance of the commercial treaty, it would rapidly be made totally dependent on exports to the Monarchy. The railway convention was nevertheless ratified in the course of 1880.

"With the commercial treaty the determination of the Austro-Hungarian government to bend Serbia to its will became painfully apparent. Andrassy by this time had stepped down as foreign minister, but his successor, Baron Haymerle, was a colourless Austrian diplomat groomed in the Andrassy

stable; and, as his right-hand man in the foreign ministry, Haymerle had the Hungarian, Kallay. Ristic's attempts to wriggle out of the terms they wanted now prompted Haymerle and Kallay to activate Austria-Hungary's secret weapon – Prince Milan. By threatening economic reprisals they had little difficulty in winning over the Austrophile Milan, and Ristic was forced to resign in October 1880.

"The commercial treaty was thus signed on May 6th, 1881. By this instrument, Austria-Hungary was given what amounted to preferential treatment in Serbia: the treaty assured Serbian produce of a readier market in the Monarchy, but it also ensured the domination of the Serbian market by Austro-Hungarian manufactured goods. The overall effect was to stunt Serbia's economic growth for a generation. With the trade treaty went an even subtler form of control, a veterinary convention. Livestock, especially pigs, were Serbia's principal export, and the country possessed no processing plant of its own. Almost all these animals marched to their fate in Austria-Hungary. The veterinary convention contained a 'swine fever clause', which enabled the Monarchy to close the Hungarian frontier to Serbian oxen and swine on the slightest suspicion of infection. It was a powerful lever, to which the Austro-Hungarian government was to resort nine times between 1881 and 1906.

"The final touch was the secret political treaty of June 28th, 1881. This showed the extent to which the Hungarians' paranoia about Russian influence in Serbia had become the stock-in-trade of Habsburg policy since the Ausgleich [the creation of the Dual Monarchy in 1867]. As Haymerle put it to the Serbian foreign minister during the negotiations, 'we could not tolerate such a Serbia on our frontier, and we would, as a lesser evil, occupy it with our armies'. The treaty bound Serbia not to tolerate 'political, religious or other intrigues... against the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy', including Bosnia. It obliged both states to observe benevolent neutrality if either was involved in war with a third party. Most startlingly, Serbia undertook, in Article IV, neither 'to negotiate nor conclude any political treaty with another government', unless Austria-Hungary approved…"

These restrictions grated on the increasing national feeling of the Serbs… Nevertheless, the international recognition of the independence of Serbia and Romania (with increased territory), together with the virtual independence of Bulgaria (even if shorn of much of her territory), was something to rejoice at. The Balkan Orthodox could now look forward to final liberation from the old enemy, Turkey, in the not so distant future. The question was: could they unite into some kind of federation or commonwealth that would bring that joyful event forward, and perhaps also help to reduce the power and influence of their other old enemy, Austria-Hungary?

There were several possibilities. One was "Yugoslavism", a federation of Slavic peoples stretching from the Croats in the West to the Bulgarians in the East, in which Serbia would serve as the geographical core and magnet, "the Piedmont of the South Slavs". Of course, this presupposed the break-up of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which Russia had opposed in 1848 even while rescuing the Habsburg Slavs from the Hungarian counter-revolution. Another was "Illyrianism" – that is, Yugoslavism without Bulgaria, Surprisingly, perhaps, in view of later history, there were many Catholic Croats and Slovenes – including the famous Catholic Bishop and opponent of papal infallibility, Strossmaier - who were enthusiastic about joining such a State. The Bulgarians were not part of this idea because of their frequent wars with Serbia over Macedonia. A third possibility was Great Serbia, the union of all the South Slavs, including those in Bosnia-Herzegovina but excluding Bulgaria, under the Serbian king.

In the long term, however, what mattered most was not the precise form of the relationship between the South Slav states as how truly Orthodox the resultant unitary state or confederation of states would be. And here the signs were not encouraging.

First of all, a truly Orthodox state required a strong "symphony" between King and Church. But this was nowhere to be found in the Balkans, imbued as the region was increasingly becoming with western ideas of democracy and constitutionalism. Moreover, both Romania and Bulgaria were ruled by Catholic Germans imposed on them by the great powers, while the Greek King George was Lutheran – and there could be no symphony between them and the Orthodox Church. Thus Protopriest Benjamin Zhukov writes: "In Austria-Hungary the Orthodox Serbs and Romanians did not pray for their emperor Franz-Joseph, who was not Orthodox. In exactly the same way the names of King George, a Lutheran, and King Ferdinand, a Catholic, were not commemorated in Orthodox Greece and Bulgaria. Instead their Orthodox heirs to the throne were commemorated. This attitude to the authorities sometimes led to conflict with them. Thus in 1888 the Bulgarian Synod was dismissed by Ferdinand of Coburg, and the members of the Synod were expelled by gendarmes from the capital because they refused to offer prayer in the churches for the Catholic prince, who had offended the Orthodox Church by many of his actions. After this the government did not allow the Synod to assemble for six years…"

Serbia was the only Balkan state ruled by native Orthodox kings – but they had the unfortunate habit of being killed by rival dynastic factions…

Another major problem was the disunity among the Orthodox Balkan states, especially over Macedonia, where Serbs, Bulgars and Greeks fought for

possession of the hearts and territories of the native inhabitants. Peace could have been achieved between them if they had recognized Russia as mediator in their quarrels. But nationalist pride would not allow any of them to recognize the Russian tsar as having the status of the Pan-Orthodox Emperor.

The indiscipline of the Balkan Orthodox was illustrated in 1885, when a band of rebels seized control of Plovdiv, capital of Eastern Rumelia, thereby violating one of the articles of the Treaty of Berlin. Prince Alexander von Battenburg of Bulgaria, who had been threatened with "annihilation" by a Macedonian secret society if he did not support the coup, promptly marched into Plovdiv (Philippopolis), took credit for the coup, and proclaimed himself the ruler of a united North and South Bulgaria.

Now from a narrowly nationalist point of view, this was a triumph – one of the most galling decisions of the Treaty of Berlin had been reversed, and Bulgaria, though formally still not completely free of Ottoman suzerainty, was now *de facto* independent and united (if we exclude the disputed territories of Northern Dobrudja and Macedonia). However, from the point of view of the preservation of international peace, and still more of Pan-Orthodox unity, it was a disaster. The Bulgarians' violation of the Treaty of Berlin gave the Turks – still a formidable military power – a good legal excuse to invade Bulgaria, which would have dragged the Russian armies back into the region only eight years after the huge and costly effort of 1877-78, which in turn may have dragged other great powers into a major European war. Sensing the danger, Tsar Alexander III, - who was not undeservedly called "the Peacemaker", - decided not to support his irresponsible nephew, Prince Alexander, and to withdraw the Russian officers from the army of his ungrateful ally. This was undoubtedly the right decision, but it cost him much - both in terms of an estrangement between Russia and Bulgaria, and in terms of his discomfiture at the hands of the British, who cynically decided to support the coup…

But this was not the end of the sorry story. The Serbian King Milan now invaded Bulgaria, boasting that he was going "on a stroll to Sofia". Barbara Jelavich explains why this conflict took place: "Since the unified Bulgarian state would be larger and more populous than Serbia, Milan felt that he was entitled to compensation. He thus launched an attack in November 1885. Despite widely held convictions that the Bulgarian army, deprived of its higher officers by the Russian withdrawal, would be crushed, it in fact defeated the invaders. The Habsburg Empire had to intercede to save Milan. Peace was made on the basis of the maintenance of the former boundaries; Serbia had to accept the Bulgarian unification. The entire episode was an enormous blow to the king's prestige."

All this was caused by the Balkan States' refusal to accept the leadership of Russia, "the Third Rome". Their behaviour confirmed Leontiev's thesis that there was little to choose between Greek and Slavic nationalism. And their failure to work more than intermittently with Russia was to lead to the most disastrous consequences over the next seventy years…

28. DEFENDERS OF THE AUTOCRACY: SOLOVIEV AND POBEDONOSTSEV

The reign of Alexander III was an era of peace and stability during which the old authoritarian regime was not seriously threatened. At the same time it was not a period of intellectual stagnation; and two powerful thinkers set about examining the foundations of the Russian autocracy. The philosopher Vladimir Soloviev examined it particularly in relation to what he regarded as its weakest point, its tendency towards unenlightened nationalism, while the law professor and over-procurator of the Holy Synod, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, examined it in relation to the fashionable contemporary theories of democracy and Church-State separation… Soloviev was, for good and for ill, the most influential thinker in Russia until his death in 1900, and for some time after. In 1874, at the age of 23, he defended his master's thesis, "The Crisis of Western Philosophy", at the Moscow Theological Academy. Coming at a time when the influence of western positivism was at its peak, this bold philosophical vindication of the Christian faith drew the attention of many; and his lectures on Godmanhood in St. Petersburg were attended by both Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky. Unfortunately, his philosophy of "pan-unity" contained pantheistic elements; there is evidence that his lectures on Godmanhood were plagiarized from the works of Schelling; and his theory of Sophia, the Wisdom of God, was both heretical in itself and gave birth to other heresies.

Turning from his metaphysics to his social and political teaching, we find in Soloviev a mixture of East and West, Slavophilism and Westernism. On the one hand, he believed fervently, with the Slavophiles, in the Divine mission of Russia. But on the other, he was fiercely critical of the nationalism of the later Slavophiles, he admired Peter the Great and did not admire Byzantium. He felt drawn to the universalism of the Roman Catholics, becoming an early "prophet" of Orthodox-Roman Catholic ecumenism.

The problem with the Slavic world and Orthodoxy, Soloviev came to believe, was its nationalism. Thus in 1885 he wrote with regard to the Bulgarian schism: "Once the principle of nationality is introduced into the Church as the main and overriding principle, once the Church is recognized to be an attribute of the people, it naturally follows that the State power that rules the people must also rule the Church that belongs to the people. The

national Church is necessarily subject to the national government, and in such a case a special church authority can exist only for show..."

Soloviev feared that Russia's political ambitions in the Balkans and the Middle East were crudely imperialist and did not serve her own deepest interests, but rather the petty nationalisms of other nations. Thus in "The Russian Idea" (1888) he wrote: "The true greatness of Russia is a dead letter for our pseudo-patriots, who want to impose on the Russian people a historical mission in their image and in the limits of their own understanding. Our national work, if we are to listen to them, is something that couldn't be more simple and that depends on one force only – the force of arms. To beat up the expiring Ottoman empire, and then crush the monarchy of the Habsburgs, putting in the place of these states a bunch of small independent national kingdoms that are only waiting for this triumphant hour of their final liberation in order to hurl themselves at each other. Truly, it was worth Russia suffering and struggling for a thousand years, and becoming Christian with St. Vladimir and European with Peter the Great, constantly in the meantime occupying its unique place between East and West, and all this just so as in the final analysis to become the weapon of the 'great idea' of the Serbs and the 'great idea' of the Bulgarians!

"But that is not the point, they will tell us: the true aim of our national politics is Constantinople. Apparently, they have already ceased to take the Greeks into account – after all, they also have their 'great idea' of pan-hellenism. But the most important thing is to know: with what, and in the name of what can we enter Constantinople? What can we bring there except the pagan idea of the absolute state and the principles of caesaropapism, which were borrowed by us from the Greeks and which have already destroyed Byzantium? In the history of the world there are mysterious events, but there are no senseless ones. No! It is not this Russia which we see now, the Russia which has betrayed its best memories, the lessons of Vladimir and Peter the Great, the Russia which is possessed by blind nationalism and unfettered obscurantism, it is not this Russia that will one day conquer the second Rome and put an end to the fateful eastern question…"

Soloviev believed passionately in freeing the Church from the shackles imposed on her by the State. In an 1885 article he wrote: "Enter into the situation of our churchman, Spiritual initiative on his own moral responsibility is not allowed. Religious and ecclesiastical truth is completely preserved in a state strongbox, under state seal and the guard of trustworthy sentries. The security is complete, but living interest is lacking. Somewhere far off a religious struggle is going on, but it does not touch us. Our pastors do not have opponents who enjoy the same rights they do. The enemies of Orthodoxy exist outside the sphere of our activity, and if they ever turn up

inside it, then only with bound hands and a gag in their mouth."

If these shackles were removed, Russian Orthodoxy could not only be able to preach to the heterodox in a more honest and free environment: she could also fulfil her own needs. For "Russia left to herself," he wrote, "*lonely* Russia, is powerless. It is not good for man to be alone: this word of God is applicable also to collective man, to a whole people. Only in union with that which she lacks can Russia utilize that which she possesses, that is, in full measure both for herself and for the whole world."

And in union with whom was Russia to quench her loneliness? Soloviev revealed his answer in 1889, in his work *La Russie et l'Eglise universelle*, in which he argued in favour of a union between the Russian empire and the Roman papacy. (He himself became a Catholic, but returned to Orthodoxy on his deathbed). The Roman papacy was to be preferred above the Orthodox Church as the partner to the Russian empire because, in Soloviev's opinion, the Orthodox Church had become a group of national Churches, rather than the Universal Church, and had therefore lost the right to represent Christ. Nevertheless, the Orthodox Church had a wealth of mystical contemplation, which had to be preserved. "In Eastern Christendom for the last thousand years religion has been identified with personal piety, and prayer has been regarded as the one and only religious activity. The Western church, without disparaging individual piety as the true germ of all religion, seeks the development of this germ and its blossoming into a social activity organized for the glory of God and the universal good of mankind. The Eastern prays, the Western prays and labours."

However, only a supernational spiritual power independent of the State could be a worthy partner of the State, forming the basis of a universal theocracy. For "here below, the Church has not the perfect unity of the heavenly Kingdom, but nevertheless she must have a certain real unity, a bond at once organic and spiritual which constitutes her a concrete institution, a living body and a moral individual. Though she does not include the whole of mankind in an actual material sense, she is nevertheless *universal* insofar as she cannot be confined exclusively to any one nation or group of nations, but must have an international centre from which to spread throughout the whole universe…

"Were she not one and universal, she could not serve as the foundation of the positive unity of all peoples, which is her chief mission. Were she not infallible, she could not guide mankind in the true way; she would be a blind leader of the blind. Finally were she not independent, she could not fulfil her duty towards society; she would become the instrument of the powers of this world and would completely fail in her mission…

"If the particular spiritual families which between them make up mankind are in reality to form a single Christian family, a single Universal Church, they must be subject to a common fatherhood embracing all Christian nations. To assert that there exist in reality nothing more than national Churches is to assert that the members of a body exist in and for themselves and that the body itself has no reality. On the contrary, Christ did not found any particular Church. He created them all in the real unity of the Universal Church which He entrusted to Peter as the one supreme representative of the divine Fatherhood towards the whole family of the sons of Man.

"It was by no mere chance that Jesus Christ specially ascribed to the first divine Hypostasis, the heavenly Father, that divine-human act which made Simon Bar-Jona the first social father of the whole human family and the infallible master of the school of mankind."

For Soloviev, wrote N.O. Lossky, "the ideal of the Russian people is of [a] *religious* nature, it finds its expression in the idea of 'Holy Russia'; the capacity of the Russian people to combine Eastern and Western principles has been historically proved by the success of Peter the Great's reforms; the capacity of national self-renunciation, necessary for the recognition of the Pope as the Primate of the Universal Church, is inherent in the Russian people, as may be seen, among other things, from the calling in of the Varangians [?]. Soloviev himself gave expression to this characteristic of the Russian people when he said that it was 'better to give up patriotism than conscience', and taught that the cultural mission of a great nation is not a *privilege*: it must not dominate, but *serve* other peoples and all mankind.

"Soloviev's Slavophil messianism never degenerated into a narrow nationalism. In the nineties he was looked upon as having joined the camp of the Westernizers. In a series of articles he violently denounced the epigons of Slavophilism who had perverted its original conception. In the article 'Idols and Ideals', written in 1891, he speaks of 'the transformation of the lofty and all-embracing Christian ideals into the coarse and limited idols of our modern paganism… National messianism was the main idea of the old Slavophils; this idea, in some form of other, was shared by many peoples; it assumed a pre-eminently religious and mystical character with the Poles (Towianski) and with some French dreamers of the thirties and forties (Michel, Ventra, etc.). What is the relation of such national messianism to the true Christian idea? We will not say that there is a contradiction of principle between them. The true Christian ideal can assume this national messianic form, but it becomes then very *easily pervertible* (to use an expression of ecclesiastical writers); i.e., it can easily change into the corresponding idol of anti-Christian nationalism, which did happen in fact.'…

"Soloviev struggled in his works against every distortion of the Christian ideal of general harmony; he also struggled against all the attempts made by man to satisfy his selfishness under the false pretence of serving a noble cause. Such are for instance the aims of chauvinistic nationalism. Many persons believe, Soloviev tells us, that in order to serve the imaginary interests of their people, 'everything is permitted, the aim justifies the means, black turns white, lies are preferable to truth and violence is glorified and considered as valor… This is first of all an insult to that very nationality which we desire to serve.' In reality, 'peoples flourished and were exalted only when they did not serve their own interests as a goal in itself, but pursued higher, *general* ideal goods.' Trusting the highly sensitive conscience of the Russian people, Soloviev wrote in his article, 'What is Demanded of a Russian Party?' 'If instead of doping themselves with Indian opium, our Chinese neighbors suddenly took a liking to the poisonous mushrooms which abound in the Siberian woods, we would be sure to find Russian jingos, who in their ardent interest in Russian trade, would want Russia to induce the Chinese government to permit the free entry of poisonous mushrooms into the Celestial empire… Nevertheless, every plain Russian will say that no matter how vital an interest may be, Russia's honor is also worth something; and, according to Russian standards, this honor definitely forbids a shady deal to become an issue of national politics.'

"Like Tiutchev, Soloviev dreamed of Russia becoming a Christian world monarchy; yet he wrote in a tone full of anxiety: 'Russia's life has not yet determined itself completely, it is still torn by the struggle between the principle of light and that of darkness. Let Russia become a Christian realm, even without Constantinople, a Christian realm in the full sense of the word, that is, one of justice and mercy, and all the rest will be surely added unto this.'"

As we have seen, Dostoyevsky disagreed with his friend on this point, considering the papacy to be, not so much a Church as a State. Nor did he agree with the doctrine of papal infallibility, which Soloviev also supported. As Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote in 1890, in his review of Soloviev's book: "A sinful man cannot be accepted as the supreme head of the Universal Church without this bride of Christ being completely dethroned. Accepting the compatibility of the infallibility of religious edicts with a life of sin, with a wicked will, would amount to blasphemy against the Holy Spirit of wisdom by admitting His compatibility with a sinful mind. Khomiakov very justly says that besides the holy inspiration of the apostles and prophets, Scripture tells us of only one inspiration – inspiration of the obsessed. But if this sort of inspiration was going on in Rome, the Church would not be the Church of Christ, but the Church of His enemy. And this is exactly how

Dostoyevsky defines it in his 'Grand Inquisitor' who says to Christ: 'We are not with Thee, but with him'… Dostoyevsky in his 'Grand Inquisitor' characterised the Papacy as a doctrine which is attractive exactly because of its worldly power, but devoid of the spirit of Christian communion with God and of contempt for the evil of the world…"

As a warning against the dangers of a Russian nationalism lacking the universalist dimension of the early Slavophiles and Dostoyevsky, Soloviev's critique had value. But his attempt to tear Russia away from Constantinople and towards Rome was misguided. And it had an unhealthy influence on other writers, such as D.S. Merezhkovsky.

Thus Merezhkovsky, according to Sergius Firsov, "found it completely normal to compare Roman Catholicism headed by the Pope and the Russian kingdom headed by the Autocrat. Calling these theocracies (that is, attempts to realise the City of God in the city of man) false, Merezhkovsky pointed out that they came by different paths to the same result: the western – to turning the Church into a State, and the eastern – to engulfing the Church in the State. 'Autocracy and Orthodoxy are two halves of one religious whole,' wrote Merezhkovsky, 'just as the papacy and Catholicism are. The Tsar is not just the Tsar, the head of the State, but also the head of the Church, the first priest, the anointed of God, that is, in the final, if historically not yet realised, yet mystically necessary extent of his power – 'the Vicar of Christ', the same Pope, Caesar and Pope in one.'"

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Merezhkovsky's comparison of the Pope and the Tsar, though greatly exaggerated, had a certain basis in fact; in the fact, namely, that the relationship between Church and State in Russia since Peter the Great had not been canonical, but leaned in a caesaropapist direction, with the Tsar having too great a control over the decisions of the Church hierarchy. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, this question became increasingly topical, with general agreement on the nature of the problem, but much less on its solution.

The debate centred especially on the personality and policies of Konstantin Petrovich Pobedonostsev, who from April, 1880 to October, 1905 was over-procurator of the Russian Holy Synod and whose policy of Orthodox conservative nationalism was dominant in Russia until the publication of the October manifesto in 1905. Dominic Lieven writes that "his view of human nature was even gloomier that of other European conservatives: the majority of human beings were weak, selfish, gullible and largely immune to the call of reason. Given this reality, democracy was likely to turn into a chaotic sham, with professional politicians, plutocrats and press pandering to the prejudices

and short-sighted greed of the electorate. In the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries, with their centuries-old tradition of individualism, an educated and self-discipline citizenry had emerged which might just be able to sustain democratic politics, especially in a land of plentiful resources like the United States. Russian traditions were different, however, and the country was both more primitive and multi-national. In consequence, liberalism and democracy would bring disaster in their wake. Only the power and symbolism of an autocratic monarchy, advised by an elite of rational expert officials, could run the country effectively. Russia was built on communities – the peasant village, the Church and the nation – and these must be preserved and protected from the attacks of Western-style individualism. The educated classes, including the aristocracy, were bearers of this bacillus and were therefore dangerous. The religious and patriotic instincts of the peasantry were a firmer basis for political stability and Russian power, but the simple people must be protected from outside influences which would sow doubts among them about values and loyalties, thereby undermining the Russian national solidarity between ruler and people on which the empire's future depended."

Since Pobednostsev personified this policy of the supremacy of the Orthodox Autocracy perhaps even more than the tsars whom he served, and since his influence extended far beyond his role as over-procurator, he was reviled more than any other figure by the liberal press. He was portrayed as standing for the complete, tyrannical domination by the State of every aspect of Russian life; and among the epithets the press gave him were "prince of darkness, hatred and unbelief", "state vampire", "the great inquisitor" and "the greatest deicide in the whole of Russian history".

These were vile slanders; for Pobedonostev was a pious man who believed in the Church, and educated the future Tsar Nicholas on the necessity of his being a servant of the Church. And although he never tried to correct the uncanonical state of Church-State relations, and even expressed the view that Peter the Great's removal of the patriarchate was "completely lawful", his work as over-procurator was in fact very beneficial. Thus he did a great deal for the development of parish schools, an essential counter-measure to the spread of liberal and atheist education in the secular schools, for the spread of the Word of God in various languages throughout the empire, for the improvement in the lot of the parish priest and for an enormous (fourfold) increase in the number of monks over the previous reign.

At the same time, it cannot be denied that the power that the tsars wielded over the Church through the over-procurators was anti-canonical. In the 16th and 17th centuries there had been something like real "symphony" between Church and State. However, the eighteenth century tsars from Peter the Great

onwards succeeded, through the lay office of over-procurator, in making the Church dependent on the State to a large degree. Finally, through his decrees of November 13, 1817 and May 15, 1824 Alexander I made the Holy Synod into a department of State.

Fortunately, the over-procurators of the 19th century were in general more Orthodox than those of the 18th century. But this did not change the essentially uncanonical nature of the situation… Some of the complaints about the State's interference in Church affairs were exaggerated - for example, the Petrine decree that priests should report the contents of confession if they were seditious. As Pobedonostsev himself pointed out, this had long been a dead letter. Others, however, were serious and had major consequences – as, for example, the tendency of over-procurators to move bishops from one diocese to another. This weakened the bond between archpastors and their flock, and thus weakened the Church's inner unity.

Firsov writes: "While K.P. Pobednostsev was over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, the transfer of hierarchs from see to see was finally turned into a kind of 'educational' measure. The paradox consisted in the fact that 'while exalting the position of bishops from an external point of view, he [Pobedonostsev] at the same time had to increase his control over them'. The over-procurator was quite unable to square this circle: he wanted an intensification of Episcopal activity and at the same time did not want to present the hierarchs with the freedom of action that was necessary for this. State control over the Church had to be kept up. It was precisely for this reason that the over-procurator so frequently moved Vladykos from see to see. According to the calculations of a contemporary investigator, 'out of 49 diocesan bishops moved in 1881-1894, eight were moved twice and eight – three times. On average in one year three diocesan bishops were moved and three vicars; four vicars received appointments to independent sees'. In 1892-1893 alone 15 diocesan bishops and 7 vicar bishops were moved, while 14 vicar-bishops were raised to the rank of diocesan. At times the new place of their service and the composition of their flock differed strikingly from the former ones. In 1882, for example, a hierarch was transferred to Kishinev from Kazan, then in his place came the bishop of Ryazan, and he was followed by the bishop of Simbirsk.

"One can understand that this 'shuffling' could not fail to affect the attitude of hierarchs to their archpastoral duties: they were more interested in smoothing relations with the secular authorities and in getting a 'good' diocese. One must recognise that serious blame for this must attach to the long-time over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, K.P. Pobedonostev…"

Nevertheless, the theoretical works of Pobednostsev demonstrate a

profound understanding of the importance of the Church in Russian life and indicate that, whether his views on Church-State relations were correct or not, he knew, as few others did, what was truly in the Church's interests.

Pobedonostsev considered that the State could not without profound damage to itself and the nation as a whole touch upon the religious consciousness of the people, upon which its own power depended; for the people will support only that government which tries to incarnate its own "idea". Thus in an article attacking the doctrine of the complete separation of Church and State that was becoming popular in Europe and Russia he wrote: "However great the power of the State, it is confirmed by nothing other than the unity of the spiritual self-consciousness between the people and the government, on the faith of the people: the power is undermined from the moment this consciousness, founded on faith, begins to divide. The people in unity with the State can bear many hardships, they can concede and hand over much to State power. Only one thing does the State power have no right to demand, only one thing will they not hand over to it – that in which every believing soul individually and all together lay down as the foundation of their spiritual being, binding themselves with eternity. There are depths which State power cannot and must not touch, so as not to disturb the root sources of faith in the souls of each and every person…"

But in recent years a division has opened up between the faith of the people and the ideology of the State. "Political science has constructed a strictly worked out teaching on the decisive separation of Church and State, a teaching in consequence of which, according to the law that does not allow a division into two of the central forces, the Church unfailingly turns out to be in fact an institution subject to the State. Together with this, the State as an institution is, according to its political ideology, separated *from every faith* and indifferent to faith. Naturally, from this point of view, the Church is represented as being nothing other than an institution satisfying one of the needs of the population that is recognised by the State – the religious need, and the State in its most recent incarnation turns to it with its right of authorisation, of supervision and control, with no concern for the faith. For the State as for the supreme political institution this theory is attractive, because it promises it complete autonomy, a decisive removal of every opposition, even spiritual opposition, and the simplification of the operations of its ecclesiastical politics."

"If the issue consists in a more exact delineation of civil society from religious society, of the ecclesiastical and spiritual from the secular, of a direct and sincere separation, without cunning or violence – in this case everybody will be for such a separation. If, coming to practical matters, they want the State to renounce the right to place pastors of the Church and from the

obligation to pay for them, this will be an ideal situation… When the question matures, the State, if it wishes to make such a decision, will be obliged to return to the person to whom it belongs the right to choose pastors and bishops; in such a case it will no longer be possible to give to the Pope what belongs to the clergy and people by historical and apostolic right…

"But they say that we must understand separation in a different, broader sense. Clever, learned people define this as follows: the State must have nothing to do with the Church, and the Church – with the State, and so humanity must revolve in two broad spheres in such a way that in one sphere will be the body and in the other the spirit of humanity, and between the two spheres will be a space as great as between heaven and earth. But is that really possible? It is impossible to separate the body from the spirit; and spirit and body live one life.

"Can we expect that the Church – I'm not talking just about the Catholic, but any Church – should agree to remove from its consciousness civil society, familial society, human society - everything that is understood by the word 'State'? Since when has it been decreed that the Church exists in order to form ascetics, fill up monasteries and express in churches the poetry of its rites and processions? No, all this is only a small part of that activity which the Church sets as her aim. She has been given another calling: *teach all nations.* That is her business. The task set before her is to form people on earth so that people of the earthly city and earthly family should be made not quite unworthy to enter the heavenly city and the heavenly community. At birth, at marriage, at death – at the most important moments of human existence, the Church is there with her three triumphant sacraments, but they say that the family is none of her business! She has been entrusted with inspiring the people with respect for the law and the authorities, and to inspire the authorities with respect for human freedom, but they say that society is none of her business!

"No, the moral principle is one. It cannot be divided in such a way that one is a private moral principle, and the other public, one secular and the other spiritual. The one moral principle embraces all relationships – private, in the home and political; and the Church, preserving the consciousness of her dignity, will never renounce her lawful influence in questions relations both to the family and to civil society. And so in demanding that the Church have nothing to do with civil society, they only give her greater strength."

"The most ancient and best known system of Church-State relations is the system of the established or State Church. The State recognises one confession out of all as being the true confession of faith and supports and protects one Church exclusively, to the prejudice of all other churches and confessions. This prejudice signifies in general that all remaining churches are not

recognised as true or completely true; but it is expressed in practice in various forms and a multitude of all manner of variations, from non-recognition and alienation to, sometimes, persecution. In any case, under the influence of this system foreign confessions are subject to a certain more or less significant diminution in honour, in law and in privilege by comparison with the native, State confession. The State cannot be the representative only of the material interests of society; in such a case it would deprive itself of spiritual power and would renounce its spiritual unity with the people. The State is the stronger and more significant the clearer its spiritual representation is manifested. Only on this condition is the feeling of legality, respect for the law and trust in State power supported and strengthened in the midst of the people and in civil life. Neither the principle of the integrity or the good of the benefit of the State, nor even the principle of morality are sufficient in themselves to establish a firm bond between the people and State power; and the moral principle is unstable, shaky, deprived of its fundamental root when it renounces religious sanction. A State which in the name of an unbiased relationship to all beliefs will undoubtedly be deprived of this central, centrifugal force and will itself renounce every belief – whatever it may be. The trust of the people for their rulers is based on faith, that is, not only on the identity of the faith of the people and the government, but also on the simple conviction that the government has faith and acts according to faith. Therefore even pagans and Mohammedans have more trust and respect for a government which stands on the firm principles of belief, whatever it may be, than for a government which does not recognise its own faith and has an identical relationship to all beliefs.

"That is the undeniable advantage of this system. But in the course of the centuries the circumstances under which this system received its beginning changed, and there arose new circumstances under which its functioning became more difficult than before. In the age when the first foundations of European civilisation and politics were laid, the Christian State was a powerfully integral and unbroken bond with the one Christian Church. Then in the midst of the Christian Church itself the original unity was shattered into many kinds of sects and different faiths, each of which began to assume to itself the significance of the one true teaching and the one true Church. Thus the State had to deal with several different teachings between which the masses of the people were distributed. With the violation of the unity and integrity in faith a period may ensue when the dominant Church, which is supported by the State, turns out to be the Church of an insignificant minority, and herself enjoys only weak sympathy, or no sympathy at all, from the masses of the people. Then important difficulties may arise in the definition of the relations between the State and its Church and the churches to which the majority of the people belong.

"From the beginning of the 18th century there begins in Western Europe a conversion from the old system to the system of the *levelling* of the Christian confessions in the State – with the removal, however, of sectarians and Jews from this levelling process. [However, it continues to be the case that] the State recognises Christianity as the essential basis of its existence and of the public well-being, and belonging to this or that church, to this or that *belief* is obligatory for every citizen.

"From 1848 this relationship of the State to the Church changes essentially: the flooding waves of liberalism break through the old dam and threaten to overthrow the ancient foundations of Christian statehood. The freedom of the State from the Church is proclaimed – it has nothing to do with the Church. The separation of the State by the Church is also proclaimed: every person is free to believe as he wants or not believe in anything. The symbol of this doctrine is the *fundamental principles* (Grundrechte) proclaimed by the Frankfurt parliament in 1848/1849. Although they soon cease to be considered valid legislation, they served and serve to this day as the ideal for the introduction of liberal principles into the most recent legislation of Western Europe. Legislation in line with these principles is everywhere now. Political and civil law is dissociated from faith and membership of this or that church or sect. The State asks nobody about his faith. The registration of marriage and acts of civil status are dissociated from the Church. Complete freedom of mixed marriages is proclaimed, and the Church principle of the indissolubility of marriage is violated by facilitating divorce, which is dissociated from the ecclesiastical courts…

"Does it not follow from this that the unbelieving State is nothing other than a utopia that cannot be realized, for lack of faith is a direct denial of the State. Religion, and notably Christianity, is the spiritual basis of every law in State and civil life and of every true culture. That is why we see that the political parties that are the most hostile to the social order, the parties that radically deny the State, proclaim before everyone that religion is only a private, personal matter, of purely private and personal interest.

"[Count Cavour's] system of 'a free Church in a free State' is based on abstract principles, theoretically; at its foundation is laid not the principle of faith, but the principle of religious indifferentism, or indifference to the faith, and it is placed in a necessary bond with doctrines that often preach, not tolerance and respect for the faith, but open or implied contempt for the faith, as to a bygone moment in the psychological development of personal and national life. In the abstract construction of this system, which constitutes a fruit of the newest rationalism, the Church is represented as also being an abstractly constructed political institution…, built with a definite aim like other corporations recognised in the State…

"… In fact, [however,] it is impossible for any soul that has preserved and experienced the demands of faith within its depths to agree without qualification, for itself personally, with the rule: 'all churches and all faiths are equal; it doesn't matter whether it is this faith or another'. Such a soul will unfailingly reply to itself: 'Yes, all faiths are equal, but my faith is better than any other for myself.' Let us suppose that today the State will proclaim the strictest and most exact equality of all churches and faiths before the law. Tomorrow signs will appear, from which it will be possible to conclude that the relative power of the faiths is by no means equal; and if we go 30 or 50 years on from the time of the legal equalisation of the churches, it will then be discovered in fact, perhaps, that among the churches there is one which in essence has a predominant influence and rules over the minds and decisions [of men], either because it is closer to ecclesiastical truth, or because in its teaching or rites it more closely corresponds to the national character, or because its organisation and discipline is more perfect and gives it more means for systematic activity, or because activists that are more lively and firm in their faith have arisen in its midst…

"And so *a free State* can lay down that it has nothing to do with *a free Church*; only the free Church, if it is truly founded on faith, will not accept this decree and will not adopt an indifferent attitude to *the free State*. The Church cannot refuse to exert its influence on civil and social life; and the more active it is, the more it feels within itself an inner, active force, and the less is it able to adopt an indifferent attitude towards the State. The Church cannot adopt such an attitude without renouncing its own Divine calling, if it retains faith in it and the consciousness of duty bound up with it. On the Church there lies the duty to teach and instruct; to the Church there belongs the performance of the sacraments and the rites, some of which are bound up with the most important acts and civil life. In this activity the Church of necessity enters ceaselessly into touch with social and civil life (not to speak of other cases, it is sufficient to point to questions of marriage and education). And so to the degree that the State, in separating itself from the Church, retains for itself the administration exclusively of the civil part of all these matters and removes from itself the administration of the spiritual-moral part, the Church will of necessity enter into the function abandoned by the State, and in separation from it will little by little come to control completely and exclusively that spiritual-moral influence which constitutes a necessary, real force for the State. The State will retain only a material and, perhaps, a rational force, but both the one and the other will turn out to be insufficient when the power of faith does not unite with them. And so, little by little, instead of the imagined equalisation of the functions of the State and the Church in political union, there will turn out to be inequality and opposition. A condition that is in any case abnormal, and which must lead either to the real dominance of the

Church over the apparently predominant State or to revolution.

"These are the real dangers hidden in the system of complete Church-State separation glorified by liberal thinkers. The system of the dominant or established Church has many defects, being linked with many inconveniences and difficulties, and does not exclude the possibility of conflicts and struggle. But in vain do they suppose that it has already outlived its time, and that Cavour's formula alone gives the key to the resolution of all the difficulties of this most difficult of questions. Cavour's formula is the fruit of political doctrinairism, which looks on questions of faith as merely political questions about the equalisation of rights. There is no depth of spiritual knowledge in it, as there was not in that other famous political formula: *freedom, equality and brotherhood,* which up to now have weighed as a fateful burden on credulous minds. In the one case as in the other, passionate advocates of freedom are mistaken in supposing that there is *freedom* in *equality*. Or is our bitter experience not sufficient to confirm the fact that freedom does not depend on equality, and that equality is by no means freedom? It would be the same error to suppose that the very *freedom* of belief consists in the *levelling* of the churches and faiths and depends on their levelling. The whole of recent history shows that here, too, freedom and equality are *not* the same thing."

29. TOLSTOY, LENIN AND THE VOLGA FAMINE

Already for over a decade, the famous novelist Lev Tolstoy had abandoned his profession of a writer, for which everyone admired him and which gave deep pleasure to millions of readers in many countries, for that of a false prophet who undermined the faith of millions in the true meaning of the Gospel. In a series of publications, Tolstoy denied all the dogmas of the Christian Faith, including the Trinity and the Divinity of Christ, and every miraculous element in the Bible. The only part of the Gospel that he clung to was the Sermon on the Mount – but interpreted in a perverse way that led him to denounce property as theft, sexual activity as evil even in marriage, and all governments, armies and penal systems as unnecessary evils that only engendered further evils. While preaching poverty and love, he failed to practice what he preached in his own life, to the great distress of his wife and family; and while his work in relieving the effects of the Volga famine of 1891-92 was undoubtedly good, the use he made of the publicity he received from it was no less undoubtedly evil.

Tolstoy had a deep influence on many people, as did his enemy and polar opposite, St. John of Kronstadt. In a way, Russian society towards the end of the century could be divided into those who believed in Tolstoy and those who believed in John of Kronstadt. Some believed, first in one, and then in the other. The latter included the future hieromartyr-bishop and organizer of the Catacomb Church, Michael Alexandrovich Novoselov. In 1886 he graduated from the historical-philological faculty of Moscow Imperial University. During this period he got to know Tolstoy, who often visited his father when he lived in Tula, and became a close friend and disciple of his. There exists a copious correspondence between them from the period 1886-1901. Michael Alexandrovich was arrested on December 27, 1887, together with some young friends who had been infected with the ideas of the "People's Will" movement, for possessing some literature of this movement as well as Tolstoy's brochure "Nicholas Palkin", and might well have been sent to Siberia if it had not been for the intervention of Tolstoy himself. In February, 1888, Michael Alexandrovich was released but forbidden to live in the capitals. Abandoning any thought of a career in teaching, Michael Alexandrovich bought some land in the village of Dugino, Tver province, and created one of the first Tolstoyan land communes in Russia. However, the peasants' refusal to accept the commune, and their patient endurance of their hard life, gradually led Michael Alexandrovich to question his own beliefs and pay more attention to the world-view of the peasants - Orthodoxy. Moreover, on one point he could never agree with Tolstoy - his rejection of the Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ, and of the element of mystery in human life. Finally, he broke with Tolstoy, and spoke against his teachings for the rest of his life,

while acknowledging the very significant influence he had had on him. Tolstoy's last letter, written in Optina desert, was addressed to M.A. Novoselov. Michael Alexandrovich did not succeed in replying to it, but much later said that if he had been able, he probably would not have replied. After the break with Tolstoy, he became very close to St. John of Kronstadt and the Optina and Zosima Desert elders…

Now Tolstoy became famed as an opponent of the government especially during the Volga famine of summer, 1891, which was caused by severe frosts in the winter followed by drought in the spring, and "exacerbated by the policy to finance industrialization by borrowing, which in turn had to be paid for by selling grain abroad." Covering an area twice the size of France, the famine together with the consequent cholera and typhus had killed half a million people by the end of 1892. On November 17, the government appointed the Tsarevich Nicholas as president of a special commission to provide help to the suffering, and was forced to appeal to the public to form voluntary organizations.

At the height of the crisis, in October, 1891, Elder Ambrose of Optina died; and with his passing it seemed as if the revolutionary forces, which had been restrained for a decade, came back to life. Tolstoy, whom St. Ambrose had called "very proud", now joined the relief campaign. "With his two eldest daughters," writes Figes, "he organized hundreds of canteens in the famine region, while Sonya, his wife, raised money from abroad. 'I cannot describe in simple words the utter destitution and suffering of these people,' he wrote to her at the end of October 1891. According to the peasant Sergei Semenov, who was a follower of Tolstoy and who joined him in his relief campaign, the great writer was so overcome by the experience of the peasants' sufferings that his beard went grey, his hair became thinner and he lost a great deal of weight. The guilt-ridden Count blamed the famine crisis on the social order, the Orthodox Church and the government. 'Everything has happened because of our own sin,' he wrote to a friend in December. 'We have cut ourselves off from our own brothers, and there is only one remedy – by repentance, by changing our lives, and by destroying the walls between us and the people.' Tolstoy broadened his condemnation of social inequality in his essay 'The Kingdom of God' (1892) and in the press. His message struck a deep chord in the moral conscience of the liberal public, plagued as they were by feelings of guilt on account of their privilege and alienation from the peasantry. Semenov captured this sense of shame when he wrote of the relief campaign: 'With every day the need and misery of the peasants grew. The scenes of starvation were deeply distressing, and it was all the more disturbing to see that amidst all this suffering and death there were sprawling estates, beautiful and well-furnished manors, and that the grand old life of the squires, with its jolly

hunts and balls, its banquets and its concerts, carried on as usual.' For the guilt-ridden liberal public, serving 'the people' through the relief campaign was a means of paying off their 'debt' to them. And they now turned to Tolstoy as their moral leader and their champion against the sins of the old regime. His condemnation of the government turned him into a public hero, a man of integrity whose word could be trusted as the truth on a subject which the regime had tried so hard to conceal."

Exploiting his fame and aristocratic birth, Tolstoy denounced the government, not only for the Samaran famine, but for almost everything else. As A.N. Wilson writes, he "defied his own Government's censorship by printing appeals in *The Daily Telegraph* [of London]. Rumours began to reach the Tolstoys that the Government was thinking of taking action against him… The Minister for the Interior told the Emperor that Tolstoy's letter to the English press 'must be considered tantamount to a most shocking revolutionary proclamation': not a judgement that can often have been made of a letter to *The Daily Telegraph.* Alexander III began to believe that it was all part of an English plot and the *Moscow Gazette*, which was fed from the Government, denounced Tolstoy's letters as 'frank propaganda for the overthrow of the whole social and economic structure of the world'." If such a characterization may seem absurdly exaggerated when made of the apostle of non-violence, it must be remembered that Tolstoy's words could well have been interpreted as a call for world revolution, and that he did more for the revolutionary cause than a thousand professional conspirators.

In this connection it is ironic that "while Lev Lvovich Tolstoy organized famine relief in the Samara district in 1891-92, there was one very conspicuous absentee from his band of helpers: Lenin, who was at that time in 'internal exile' there. According to a witness, Vladimir Ulyanov (as he still was) and a friend were the only two political exiles in Samara who refused to belong to any relief committee or to help in the soup kitchens. He was said to welcome the famine 'as a factor in breaking down the peasantry and creating an industrial proletariat'. Trotsky, too, took the line that it was improper to do anything to improve the lot of the people while the autocracy remained in power. When they themselves seized power, the chaos and desolation were immeasurably worse. One thinks of the crop failure on the Volga in 1921 when somewhere between one and three million died, in spite of the fact that they allowed in foreign aid. By the time of the 1932-33 famine in the Ukraine, the Soviet Union was enjoying the munificent protection of Comrade Stalin. His policy was to allow no foreign aid, and no Government intervention. At least five million died…"

"Russian society," continues Figes, "had been activated and politicized by the famine crisis, its social conscience had been stung, and the old

bureaucratic system had been discredited. Public mistrust of the government did not diminish once the crisis had passed, but strengthened as the representatives of civil society continued to press for a greater role in the administration of the nation's affairs. The famine, it was said, had proved the culpability and incompetence of the old regime, and there was now a growing expectation that wider circles of society would have to be drawn into its work if another catastrophe was to be avoided. The zemstvos, which had spent the past decade battling to expand their activities in the face of growing bureaucratic opposition, were now strengthened by widespread support from the liberal public for their work in agronomy, public health and education. The liberal Moscow merchants and industrialists, who had rallied behind the relief campaign, now began to question the government's policies of industrialization, which seemed so ruinous for the peasantry, the main buyers of their manufactures. From the middle of the 1890s they too supported the various projects of the zemstvos and municipal bodies to revive the rural economy. Physicians, teachers and engineers, who had all been forced to organize themselves as a result of their involvement in the relief campaign, now began to demand more professional autonomy and influence over public policy; and when they failed to make any advances they began to campaign for political reforms. In the press, in the 'thick journals', in the universities, and in learned and philanthropic societies, the debates on the causes of the famine – and on reforms needed to prevent its recurrence – continued to rage throughout the 1890s, long after the immediate crisis had passed.

"The socialist opposition, which had been largely dormant in the 1880s, sprang back into life with a renewed vigour as a result of these debates. There was a revival of the Populist movement (later rechristened Neo-Populism), culminating in 1901 with the establishment of the Socialist Revolutionary Party. Under the leadership of Viktor Chernov (1873-1952), a law graduate from Moscow University who had been imprisoned in the Peter and Paul Fortress for his role in the student movement, it embraced the new Marxist sociology whilst still adhering to the Populist belief that all the workers and peasants alike - what it called the 'labouring people' – were united by their poverty and their opposition to the regime. Briefly, then, in the wake of the famine, there was growing unity between the Marxists and the Neo-Populists as they put aside their differences about the development of capitalism (which the SRs now accepted as a fact) and concentrated on the democratic struggle…

"Marxism as a social science was fast becoming the national creed: it alone seemed to explain the causes of the famine. Universities and learned societies were swept along by the new intellectual fashion. Even such well-established institutions as the Free Economic Society fell under the influence of the Marxists, who produced libraries of social statistics, dressed up as studies of

the causes of the great starvation, to prove the truth of Marx's economic laws. Socialists who had previously wavered in their Marxism were now completely converted in the wake of the famine crisis, when, it seemed to them, there was no more hope in the Populist faith in the peasantry. Petr Struve (1870-1944), who had previously thought of himself as a political liberal, found his Marxist passions stirred by the crisis: it 'made much more of a Marxist out of me than the reading of Marx's *Capital*'. Martov also recalled how the crisis had turned him into a Marxist: 'It suddenly became clear to me how superficial and groundless the whole of my revolutionism had been until then, and how my subjective political romanticism was dwarfed before the philosophical and sociological heights of Marxism.' Even the young Lenin only became converted to the Marxist mainstream in the wake of the famine crisis.

"In short, the whole of society had been politicized and radicalized as a result of the famine crisis. The conflict between the population and the regime had been set in motion…"

Was Lenin a real Marxist? Certainly, although he owed almost as much to Bakuninist anarchism as to Marxism. "There is no doubt that Lenin saw himself as a true follower of Marx—and he had every reason to. By the end of the 19th century, socialist thought was dividing. Marx's laws of motion were failing. Capitalism still flourished: no sign of the falling rate of profit that would signal its end. The working class was getting the vote. The welfare state was taking shape. Factory conditions were improving and wages were rising well above the floor of subsistence. All this was contrary to Marx's laws.

"In response, the left was splitting. On one side were reformers and social democrats who saw that capitalism could be given a human face. On the other were those who believed that Marx's system could be developed and restated, always true to its underlying logic—and, crucially, with its revolutionary as opposed to evolutionary character brought to the fore.

"Whose side in this would Marx have been on? Revolution or reform? Would he have continued to insist that the vampire be destroyed? Or would he have turned reformer, asking it nicely to suck a bit less blood? The latter seems unlikely. Marx was a scholar, but he was also a fanatic and a revolutionary. His incapacity for compromise (with comrades, let alone opponents) was pathological. And in the preface to the 1882 Russian edition of the *Manifesto*, his last published writing, Marx hoped that a revolution in Russia might become 'the signal for a proletarian revolution in the West, so that both complement each other'; if so, Russia, despite its pre-capitalist characteristics, 'may serve as the starting-point for a communist

development.' Lenin was surely right to believe that he, not those soft-headed bourgeois accommodationists, was true to the master's thought."

The fruits of the radicalization of society were not slow to reveal themselves. In 1897 the "Universal Jewish Workers' Union in Russia, Poland and Lithuania", otherwise known as the Bund, was founded. In the spring of the next year the Russian Social-Democratic Party was founded.

It was from the Russian S-Ds that both the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks came. The party was founded with the active participation of the Bund. The Russian-Jewish revolutionary underground had received its first organizational impulse…

Lenin said that Tolstoy was "the mirror of the Russian revolution". However, this is only part of the truth: to a significant degree, Tolstoy was also the *father* of the revolution. His first (unrealised) literary project was to write a novel on the Decembrists, the failed revolutionaries of 1825, one of whom, Sergei Volkonsky, had been his relative. His last, *Resurrection,* published in 1899, was a sustained attack on the existing order and the Orthodox Church; it inspired the failed revolution of 1905. No wonder that throughout the Soviet period, while other authors were banned and their works destroyed, the Jubilee edition of Tolstoy's *Complete Works* (1928) continued to sell in vast numbers…

30. THE ORTHODOX AUTOCRATIC IDEAL

Tsar Alexander III died peacefully and in full consciousness on October 20, 1904, his head cradled by the greatest saint of the age, Fr. John of Kronstadt. His reign had been peaceful and prosperous, in some ways a model of autocratic government. The revolutionary-turned-monarchist Lev Alexandrovich Tikhomirov well summarized the autocratic ideal he represented as follows:-

"How much confusion falls away with one look at this grand reign! How many forgotten truths it reveals! Monarchy is not dictatorship, not simple absolutism. Dictatorship is the personified fulfillment of the people's imminent will, and absolutism is its negation. Monarchy – in its autocratic ideal – can sometimes do that which dictatorship does, and can, if necessary, act by rejecting popular will. But in itself it stands higher than whatever will of the people there might be. Monarchy is the idea of subordination of interests and desires to *higher truth*.

"In monarchy the nation seeks sanctification of all the manifestations of its complex life through subordination to the *truth*. Personal authority is needed for this, as only a man has a *conscience*, and *only a man answers* before God. Unlimited *authority* is needed, for any restriction on the power of the Tsar by people would free him from answering to his conscience and to God. Surrounded by restrictions, he would already be subject not to *truth*, but certain interests, one or another earthly power.

"However, the unlimited and individual nature of decision are not the essence of monarchy, but only a necessary condition so that all social interests, their conflicts and their struggles, may be brought to agreement before an authority of the same *truth* that is above them all.

"This is why the bearer of the ideal came into the world, according to the conviction expressed by all the world in recent days, as a Tsar of truth and peace. He should have been namely such, *for the essence of monarchy is in the reconciling power of higher truth*.

"The monarch does not break the social structure of life; he neither destroys any differences created by its diversity, nor does he dismantle the great or the small, but everything he directs so that the development of all classes, all groups and all institutions in no way violates truth. And thereby he gives the nation that unity which was vainly sought in "representation" and now is to be achieved in suicidal equalization.

"The monarch does not destroy self-initiative, advice, the work of popular thought, and he doesn't negate the popular will when it exists. He is *higher*than all this. He is given not for destruction, but for *direction*. For him there is neither the wise man nor the fool, neither the strong nor the powerless, neither the majority nor the minority. For him there is only *conscience* and *truth*. He should see everything, but will support only that in which there is truth.

"Emperor Alexander III showed that monarchy in its true essence is not anything transitional, obsolete or compatible only with one phase of cultural development, but is an *eternal* principle, always possible, always necessary, and the highest of all political principles. If at any time this principle becomes impossible for some nation, then it is not because of the condition of its culture, but because of the moral degeneration of the nation itself. Where people want to live according to *truth*, autocracy is necessary and always possible under any degree of culture.

"Being the authority of *truth*, monarchy is impossible without religion. Outside of religion, personal authority gives only dictatorship or absolutism, but not monarchy. Only as the instrument of God's will does the autocrat possess his personal and unlimited authority. Religion in monarchy is needed not only for the people. The people should believe in God so they may desire to subject themselves to truth – yet the autocrat needs faith all the more so, for in matters of state power, he is the intermediary between God and the people. The autocrat is limited neither by human authority nor popular will, but he does not have *his* will and *his* desires. His autocracy is not a privilege, but a simple concentration of human authority, and it is a grave struggle, a great service, the height of human selflessness and a cross, not a pleasure. Therefore monarchy receives its full meaning only in *heredity*. There is no future autocrat if there is no will, no wish to choose between the lot of the Tsar and the plough-man, but it is already appointed him to deny himself and assume the cross of authority. Not according to desire or the calling of one's capabilities, but according to God's purpose does he stand at his post. And he should not ask himself whether he has the strength, but rather he should only believe that if God chose him, the hesitations of man have no place.

"It is in the greatness of subordination to the will of God that sanctification of our political life is given in the ideal of monarchy.

"In those epochs when this ideal is alive and universal, one does not need to be a great man for the dignified passage of the autocrat's vocation. Not all warriors are heroes, but in a well-organized army even the ordinary man finds the strength to heroically conquer and heroically die. And so it is in everything else. But with the advance of the age of demoralization and the

neglect of the ideal, only a great chosen one may resurrect it in human hearts. There is nowhere for him to learn, for everything about does not help him, but only hinders. He must draw upon everything from within himself, and not just in that measure necessary for the execution of his duty, but in that which is needed to enlighten all his surroundings. Indeed, what help would it be to the world if Alexander III confined himself only to giving Russia thirteen years of prosperity? The bearer of the ideal is sent not so we would enjoy prosperity, remaining unworthy of it, but to awaken within us the aspiration to be worthy of the ideal."

PART IV. WAR AND REVOLUTION (1894-1905)

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.
I Samuel (I Kings) 15.23.

31. TSAR NICHOLAS II

The meek and gentle Tsar Nicholas II came to the throne on the death of his father in 1894. Since he has probably been more slandered and misunderstood and grossly underestimated than any ruler in history, it is necessary to begin with a characterization of him.

He was born in St. Petersburg on May 6, 1868, the day upon which the Holy Church celebrates the memory of St. Job the Long-Suffering. And how prophetic this turned out to be - for Nicholas was destined to follow the example of this great Old Testament Saint both in circumstance and in faith. Just as the Lord allowed the Patriarch Job to suffer many things, trying him in the fire of calamity to test his faith, so was Nicholas tried and tempted, but he too never yielded and remained above all a man of God.

His grandfather was Tsar Alexander II, the liberator of the peasants, who loved him and called him "sun ray". "When I was small," said Nicholas to his daughters, "they sent for me every day to visit my grandfather. My brother George and I had the habit of playing in his study while he was working. His smile was so pleasant, although his face was usually handsome and calm. I remember that it made a great impression on me in my early childhood... Once my parents were away, and I was at the all-night vigil with my grandfather in the small church in Alexandria. During the service there was a powerful thunderstorm, streaks of lightning flashed one after the other, and it seemed as if the peals of thunder would shake even the church and the whole world to its foundations. Suddenly it became quite dark, a blast of wind from the open door blew out the flame of the candles which were lit in front of the iconostasis, there was a long clap of thunder, louder than before, and I suddenly saw a fiery ball flying from the window straight towards the head of the Emperor. The ball (it was of lightning) whirled around the floor, then passed the chandelier and flew out through the door into the park. My heart froze, I glanced at my grandfather - his face was completely calm. He crossed himself just as calmly as he had when the fiery ball had flown near us, and I felt that it was unseemly and not courageous to be frightened as I was. I felt that one had only to look at what was happening and believe in the mercy of God, as he, my grandfather, did. After the ball had passed through the whole church, and suddenly gone out through the door, I again looked at my grandfather. A faint smile was on his face, and he nodded his head at me. My panic disappeared, and from that time I had no more fear of storms."

Dominic Lieven writes: "Aged 10, Nicholas was handed over to a military governor, General G.G. Danilovich... Danilovich himself invited specialists to come to the palace to teach the heir a range of subjects including four modern

languages (Russian, French, English and German), mathematics, history, geography and chemistry. Of the subjects Nicholas was taught, history was much the closest to his heart. His membership of the Imperial Historical Society from the age of 16 was more than merely honorary. Many years later, in the enforced leisure of his Siberian exile, he returned to reading works of history. He commented to his son's English teacher, Sydney Gibbes, that 'his favourite subject was history' and that he 'had to read a good deal when he was young, but had no time for it later'. In his youth and adolescence Nicholas had, however, also read fiction in English, French and Russian. Someone capable of mastering four languages and coping with Dostoevsky and the historians Karamzin and Soloviev at this age cannot have been without brains.

"Of his tutors, Charles Heath seems to have been closest to the heir... General V.N. Voeykov, the last Commander of the Imperial Palaces in Nicholas's reign, knew the monarch well. He commented that 'one of the Emperor's outstanding qualities was his self-control. Being by nature very quick tempered, he had worked hard on himself from his childhood under the direction of his tutor, the English Mister Heath, and had achieved a tremendous degree of self-possession. Mister Heath frequently reminded his imperial pupil of the English saying that aristocrats are born but gentlemen are made.'"

Nicholas Alexandrovich loved birds. When he heard them singing, he would become so absorbed that his playmates often commented on it. Once, when a young sparrow fell from its nest, little Nika, as his friends called him, said:

"It is necessary to pray for the little sparrows; may Dearest God not take it - He has enough sparrows."

On March 13, 1881, the Tsar-Liberator, Alexander II, was murdered by a revolutionary fanatic. On a Petersburg street, in broad daylight, a bomb was thrown which injured some of the guards but left the Tsar unhurt. With disregard for personal safety, he left his carriage and was attending to the injured when a second bomb was thrown, fatally wounding him and many others. He was rushed to the Winter Palace where he died in the presence of his grief-stricken family. Later, on the spot of the murder, there was built a magnificent church, Christ the Saviour "Upon the Blood", which became the stronghold of the Catacomb Church in Petrograd after the revolution.

Nicholas described the event as follows: "We were having breakfast in the Anichkov palace, my brother and I, when a frightened servant ran in and said:

"'An accident has happened to the Emperor! The heir [the future Tsar Alexander III, Nicholas' father] has given the order that Great Prince Nicholas Alexandrovich (that is, I) should immediately go to the Winter palace. One must not lose time.'

"General Danilov and I ran down, got into a carriage and rushed along Nevsky to the Winter palace. When we were going up the staircase, I saw that all those who met us had pale faces and that there were big red spots on the carpet - when they had carried my grandfather up the staircase, blood from the terrible wounds he had suffered from the explosion had poured out. My parents were already in the study. My uncle and aunt were standing near the window. Nobody said a word. My grandfather was lying on the narrow camp bed on which he always slept. He was covered with the military greatcoat that served as his dressing-gown. His face was mortally pale, it was covered with small wounds. My father led me up to the bed:

"'Papa,' he said, raising his voice, 'your sun ray is here.'

"I saw a fluttering of his eyelids. The light blue eyes of my grandfather opened. He tried to smile. He moved his finger, but could not raise his hand and say what he wanted, but he undoubtedly recognized me. Protopresbyter Bazhenov came up to him and gave him Communion for the last time, we all fell on our knees, and the Emperor quietly died. Thus was it pleasing to the Lord."

"Nicholas Alexandrovich," writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "grew up 'as a normal, healthy Russian person'… From childhood he was able first of all 'to pray well to God'. His biographer would unanimously note that faith in God was the living condition of his soul. He did not make a single important decision without fervent prayer! At the same time, being a young man and not yet Tsar, Nicholas Alexandrovich externally lived in the same way that almost all worldly young people of his time and his level of education. He loved sport, games, military activities, and acquired a fashionable for that time habit of smoking. He had an affair with the ballerina Kshesinskaya – which, however, he decisively cut short after an open and firm explanation with his father. He read a great deal, both spiritual and scientific and artistic literature (he loved L. Tolstoy's *War and Peace*), he loved amateur dramatics and various 'shows' in the circle of his family and friends, he was keen on amusing tricks. But all this was *to a degree*, without extremes, and never going to the service of the passions. He had a strong will, and with the help of God and his parents he was able to control and rule himself. In sum, he preserved a wonderful clarity, integrity and purity of soul. The direct gaze of his deep, grey-blue eyes, which often flashed with welcoming humour, penetrated into

the very soul of his interlocuters, completely captivating people who had not yet lost the good, but he was unendurable for the evil. Later, when his relations with the Tsar were already hostile, Count S.Yu. Witte wrote: 'I have never met a more educated person in my life than the presently reigning Emperor Nicholas II'. Nicholas Alexandrovich was distinguished by a noble combination of a feeling of dignity with meekness (at times even shyness), extreme delicacy and attentiveness in talking with people. He was sincerely and unhypocritically *simple* in his relations with everybody, from the courtier to the peasant. He was organically repelled by any self-advertisement, loud phrases or put-on poses. He could not endure artificiality, theatricality and the desire 'to make an impression'. He never considered it possible for him to show to any but the very closest people his experiences, sorrows and griefs. It was not cunning, calculated concealment, but precisely humility and the loftiest feeling of personal responsibility before God for his decisions and acts that led him to share his thoughts with almost nobody until they had matured to a point close to decision. Moreover, like his father, he put these decisions into effect in a quiet, unnoticed manner, through his ministers and courtiers, so that it *seemed* as if they were not his decisions… Later only his wife, Tsarina Alexandra Fyodorovna, knew the hidden life of his soul, knew him to the end. But for others, and especially for 'society', Nicholas Alexandrovich, like his crown-bearing forbear, Alexander I, was and remained an *enigma*, 'a sphinx'. It would not have been difficult to decipher this enigma if there had been the desire, if people had looked at his deeds and judged him from them. But 'educated' society did not have this desire (there is almost none even now!). However, there was a great desire to represent him as 'the all-Russian despot', 'the tyrant' in the most unflattering light. And so sometimes spontaneously, at other times *deliberately*, a slanderous, completely distorted image of Tsar Nicholas II was created, in which by no means the least important place was occupied by malicious talk of the 'weakness' of his will, his submission to influences, his 'limitations', 'greyness', etc. One could test the Russian intelligentsia, as if by litmus paper, by their attitude to the personality of Nicholas Alexandrovich. And the testing almost always confirmed the already clearly established truth that in the whole world it was impossible to find a more despicable 'cultural intelligentsia' in its poverty and primitiveness than the Russian!... However, the personality of Nicholas II was not badly seen and understood by those representatives of the West who were *duty-bound* to understand it! The German chargé in Russia, Count Rechs, reported to his government in 1893: '… I consider Emperor Nicholas to be a spiritually gifted man, with a noble turn of mind, circumspect and tactful. His manners are so meek, and he displays so little *external* decisiveness, that one could easily come to the conclusion that he does not have a strong will, but the people around him assure me that he has a very definite will, which he is able to effect in life in *the quietest* manner.' The report was accurate. Later the West would more than once become convinced that the Tsar had an

exceptionally strong will. President Emile Lubet of France witnessed in 1910: 'They say about the Russian Tsar that he is accessible to various influences. This is profoundly untrue. The Russian Emperor himself puts his ideas into effect. His plans are maturely conceived and thoroughly worked out. He works unceasingly on their realization.' Winston Churchill, who knew what he was talking about when it came to rulers, had a very high opinion of the statesmanship abilities of Nicholas II. The Tsar received a very broad higher juridical and military education. His teachers were outstanding university professors, including… K.P. Pobedonostsev and the most eminent generals of the Russian army. Nicholas Alexandrovich took systematic part in State affairs, and was president of various committees (including the Great Siberian railway), sitting in the State Council and the Committee of Ministers. He spoke English, French and German fluently. He had an adequate knowledge of Orthodox theology…"

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On succeeding to the throne, Tsar Nicholas became the ruler of the largest and most variegated empire in world history. Extending from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, from the Arctic tundra to the sands of Central Asia, it included within its borders a great number of races and religions. It had the largest army in the world and the fastest-growing economy. And its influence extended well beyond its borders. The Orthodox Christians of Eastern Europe and the Middle East looked to it for protection, as did the Orthodox missions in Persia, China, Japan and the United States, while its potential to become the world's most powerful nation was recognized by France and Germany.

The Tsar's personal life was exemplary. In an age when family life, especially among the nobility, was being undermined, the family of Tsar Nicholas presented an icon, as it were, of what Christian family life should be. Love, obedience and humility were at the root of all their relations. It was fitting, therefore, that the family as a whole should receive the crown on martyrdom in 1918…

Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) wrote about the new tsar: "Our Sovereign had a broad, tender, almost feminine heart. At the same time it was fearless. In his love he embraced not only the Russian people, not only the Orthodox Slavs, but also the whole of humanity, and did this not out of love of honour and not for glory, but out of the fullness of a sincere heart."

The Tsar was indeed unparalleled in Russian history for his mercifulness. He pardoned criminals, even revolutionaries, and gave away vast quantities of his own land and money to alleviate the plight of the peasants. It is believed that he gave away the last of his personal wealth during the Great

War, to support the war effort. Even as a child he often wore patched clothing while spending his personal allowance to help poor students to pay for their tuition. The Interior Minister, Peter Durnovo, said of him that "he was the kind of man who, if you asked him for his last shirt, would take it off and give it to you." In 1915, when the Turks were massacring the Armenians, he opened the frontier to 350,000 refugees…

The Tsar considered it his sacred duty to restore to Russia her ancient traditional Orthodox culture, which had been abandoned by many of the "educated" classes in favour of modern, Western styles. He encouraged the building of churches and the painting of icons in the traditional Byzantine and Old Russian styles. In the words of Archpriest Michael Polsky, "In the person of the Emperor Nicholas II the believers had the best and most worthy representative of the Church, truly 'The Most Pious' as he was referred to in church services. He was a true patron of the Church, and a solicitor of all her blessings."

During the reign of Tsar Nicholas, the Church reached her fullest development and power. "By the outbreak of revolution in 1917… it had between 115 and 125 million adherents (about 70 per cent of the population), around 120,000 priests, deacons and other clergy, 130 bishops, 78,000 churches [up by 10,000], 1,253 monasteries [up by 250], 57 seminaries and four ecclesiastical academies." Traditional church arts were encouraged, and old churches were renovated. The Emperor himself took part in the laying of the first cornerstones and the consecration of many churches. He visited churches and monasteries in all parts of the country, venerating their saints.

A particular feature of his reign was the very active part he took in the glorification of new saints, sometimes urging on an unwilling Holy Synod. Among those glorified during his reign were: St. Theodosius of Chernigov (in 1896), St. Isidore of Yuriev (1897), St. Seraphim of Sarov (1903), St. Euphrosyne of Polotsk (1909), St. Anna of Kashin (1910), St. Joasaph of Belgorod (1911), St. Hermogenes of Moscow (1913), St. Pitirim of Tambov (1914), St. John (Maximovich) of Tobolsk (1916) and St. Paul of Tobolsk (1917).

The Emperor stressed the importance of educating the peasant children within the framework of church and parish. As a result, the number of parish schools, which were more popular among the peasants than the state schools, grew to 37,000. *The Times* of London wrote in 1913 that "the House of Romanoff has done more than create a mighty Empire. It has flung wide the gates of knowledge to a great people…" Thus Christian literature flourished; excellent journals were published, such as *Soul-Profiting Reading, Soul-Profiting Converser, The Wanderer, The Rudder, The Russian Monk*, *The Trinity Leaflets* and the ever-popular *Russian Pilgrim*. The Russian people were surrounded by

spiritual nourishment as never before.

Nor did the Emperor neglect the material condition of his people. General V.N. Voeikov writes: “In order to understand how Russia flourished in the last twenty years before the war, we must turn to statistics. From 1892 to 1913 the harvest of breads increased by 78%; the quantity of horned cattle increased between 1896 and 1914 by 63.5%; the mining of coal increased from 1891 to 194 by 300%; oil industrialization – by 65%. At the same time the state budget provided the possibility of increasing its contribution to popular education to the Ministry of Popular Education alone by 628% from 1894 to 1914; while the railway network increased in length from 1895 to 1915 by 103%, etc.”

Under Tsar Nicholas’ leadership Russia made vast strides in economic development. He changed the passport system introduced by Peter I and thus facilitated the free movement of the people, including travel abroad. The poll tax was abolished and taxation per person remained the lowest in Europe. A voluntary programme of hospitalization insurance was introduced, under which, for a payment of one rouble per year, a person was entitled to free hospitalisation. The parity of the rouble was increased greatly on the international markets during his reign. In 1897, a law was enacted to limit work hours; night work was forbidden for women and minors under seventeen years of age, and this at a time when the majority of the countries in the West had almost no labour legislation at all. In 1906 trade union legistlation was introduced, and in 1912 – the most advanced social insurance system in Europe. As William Taft commented in 1912, "the Russian Emperor has enacted labour legislation which not a single democratic state could boast of".

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The distinguishing characteristic of Tsar Nicholas II's character was submission to the will of God. His faith in the Divine wisdom that directs events gave him that supernatural calm which never abandoned him. During a visit to Japan the young Tsarevich had narrowly escaped death from a terrorist, and many members of his government, including his uncle, Great Duke Sergius Alexandrovich, were killed by terrorists. But the Tsar always showed great calmness at moments of danger.

This was probably because he had already been informed how and when he would in fact die. This may well have been through a letter written to him by St. Seraphim of Sarov, which the Tsar opened during his canonization in 1903. We do not know the contents of the letter, but we know that they shook him to the core…

On January 6, 1905, at the feast of the Blessing of the Water at the Winter Palace, the following incident took place. During the salute of the guns of the Peter and Paul fortress, one of the guns was loaded with grape-shot, and the grape-shot struck the windows of the palace. Part fell near the procession where the clergy and the emperor's and empress's suite were. The calmness of the emperor's reaction was so striking that it drew the attention of the members of his suite. He didn't move a hair and only asked:

"Who commanded the battery?"

And when they gave the name, he said with evident sympathy:

"Ach, poor (so-and-so), how sorry I am for him!"

They asked the emperor what effect this incident had had on him. He replied:

"I fear nothing until 1918..."

The emperor forgave the commander of the battery and the officer who ordered the shooting because by the mercy of God there had been no serious injuries. Only one policeman had been very slightly wounded. His name was - Romanov...

On another occasion, the emperor was talking about the sufferings that lay ahead of him with his prime minister at the time, Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin.

"It was not for nothing," he said, "that I was born on the day of Job the Much-Suffering."

And on other occasions he said:

"I have more than a presentiment that I am destined for terrible trials, and that I shall not be rewarded for them on this earth... Nothing that I have undertaken succeeds for me; I have no successes. Man's will is so weak... How many times have I applied to myself the words of the holy Job, 'For the thing that I fear comes upon me, and what I dread befalls me.'"

Once, having prayed a little before an important decision, the emperor said to Stolypin:

"Perhaps an atoning sacrifice is necessary for the salvation of Russia. I shall be that sacrifice. May the will of God be done!"

Stolypin later recalled: "He made this triumphant declaration to me in the simplest, calmest and most even voice. There was a strange mixture in his voice, and especially in his look, of decisiveness and meekness, at the same time unshakeable and passive, unclear and well-defined; as if he was expressing, not his own will, but was rather bowing to some external power - the majesty of Providence."

After the disturbances of 1905-06, Russian entered into a period of great prosperity. With the wise and dynamic assistance of Stolypin, Tsar Nicholas led the nation through a time of such growth - agricultural, economic, educational and industrial - that had the First World War not occurred, Russia would have undoubtedly become the leading nation of the world. Nor was this the opinion only of Russian ministers such as the Minister of Agriculture A.V. Krivoshein. It was repeated by, for example, the French economist Edmond Thierry, who said in 1914 that "by the middle of the century Russia will be dominant in Europe both from the political and from the economic-financial point of view."

But the Tsar never pursued industrial growth at the expense of his people. In 1908 he was presented with a huge plan for industrialisation which demanded far more money than was available. The Tsar replied:

"Peter I had little money and so he used forced labour and this cost him the lives of a million of his subjects... the realization of this project would cost between 10 and 15 millions of the premature deaths of my subjects... I cannot in conscience sacrifice millions of my subjects, and therefore we must endure (without industrialization)."

When he was advised that the success of future wars depended upon industrialisation, he replied:

"We will hope in God. If the war is short, we will win, but if it is long, then such is our fate."

Many have criticized this attitude of the Tsar, calling it "fatalism", "weakness of will", "pusillanimity", "lack of courage". They say that he pushed around by circumstances and the people closest to him. A close study of his reign does not confirm his estimate; nor was it shared by several of the politicians and statesmen who knew him well. Moreover, it must be remembered that although he was an autocrat, he lived in an era when monarchy was already falling out of fashion. It was no longer possible, as it had been (almost) in the time of Louis XIV or Peter the Great, for one man to impose his will on a whole nation.

In this connection the words on autocracy of Catherine the Great, one of the most powerful monarchs in history, are worth remembering: "It is not as easy as you think… In the first place my orders would not be carried out unless they were the kind of orders that could be carried out; you know with what prudence and circumspection I act in the promulgation of my laws. I examine the circumstances, I take advice, I consult the enlightened part of the people, and in this way I find out what sort of effect my law will have. And when I am already convinced in advance of general approval, then I issue my orders, and have the pleasure of observing what you call blind obedience. *And that is the foundation of unlimited power.* But believe me, they will not obey blindly when orders are not adapted to the customs, to the opinion of the people, and if I were to follow only my own wishes not thinking of the consequences…"

If we take into account the extraordinarily difficult circumstances of his reign, the multitude of enemies he encountered from both within and without, and the paucity of real friends and allies he had, we must conclude that Tsar Nicholas accomplished much, very much

And that he crowned a righteous life with a truly martyric death, fully deserving to be considered as, Blessed Pasha of Sarov put it, "the greatest of the Tsars"…

Indeed, what many considered to be his great weakness was in fact his greatest strength. Wisdom consists in knowing what we can change and what we cannot change and then taking the appropriate decisions. The Tsar was in fact very active and hard-working; but he always understood that "man proposes, but God disposes", and that to a very large extent the outcomes of our actions are determined by factors that we cannot control, but which are in the hands of God.

Now the dominant fact about the period in which Tsar Nicholas lived was that God was angry with His people, whose faith and morality were in sharp decline. The Tsar, as "he who restrains" the coming of the Antichrist (II Thessalonians 2.7), did everything within his power to slow down this decline, and to steer his people on the path of piety while caring also for their material needs. However, he knew – it had been revealed to him by the holy elders and prophets – that the punishment of God was hanging like the sword of Damocles over Russia, and that he himself, and all that he held dear, would be swept up in the overall catastrophe. This did not prevent him from trying to ward off the catastrophe for as long as possible – this was his duty, the task for which he had been chosen and anointed by God. But at the same time, as we shall see, the knowledge of what was to come coloured his judgements

and behavior at critical moments - in 1914, for example, in the build-up to the world war, and in 1917, during the abdication crisis - in ways that people at the time, and many people since, have found enigmatic…

Submission to the will of God, patient acceptance of suffering as from His hand, and forgiveness of enemies – these are the qualities that made the Tsar great and enabled him to carry his very heavy cross to the end. And he was strengthened on his path by his Tsaritsa, who had the same qualities – and a similarly heavy cross. As she wrote in her diary: "St. Paul tells us here also that he rejoiced in his thorn. He did not at first. He cried to heaven to have it removed. But when his Master told him that he needed to keep it, that he needed it, that it had in it a blessing for him, he chafed no longer. Indeed, he made friends with it quickly, accepted it, and stopped complaining about it. That is the only right and sensible thing to do with any disagreeable, uncongenial, or painful thing we find we cannot have removed. It is God's will that it should be in our life for some good reason which He knows. We should get the victory over it by taking it to our heart, by receiving it as coming from Christ. No matter how it hurts us, if we accept it in this way it will leave benediction in our life. God sends some of our greatest blessings to us in our thorns, and it will be sad thing if we thrust them away and miss them. There are many who are so full of themselves that they have no room for Christ. If only they could come empty, empty of self, He would fill them with Himself, and then they would have untold power for good in the world. We may safely trust Him with the enriching of our lives. He knows when pain in needful, when loss is the only way to gain, when suffering is necessary to hold us at His feet. He gives us trouble in order to bless us in some way, and we shall always be losers when we chafe or reject our thorn."

32. THE FOREIGN POLICY OF TSAR NICHOLAS

The most important decisions of Russian foreign policy around the turn of the century were the turning away from Germany, leading to the alliance with France, and the turning towards the Far East. Both of these changes of policy were initiated by Alexander III and accomplished by Nicholas II.

For nearly two centuries, Germany had been Russia's most important foreign-policy partner, and after the division of Poland in the late eighteenth century she became her closest important neighbour. The two countries had been allies against Napoleon, and Germany had not joined the anti-Russian alliance in the Crimean War. Russia's traditional enemies were not Germany, but France and England. The Romanov dynasty was largely German by blood, and much of the Russian nobility and senior bureaucracy had German names. Germany was also an increasingly important trading partner.

And yet Germany was beginning to be a problem… Her victory over France in 1870 had served to calm the passion of wounded pride elicited by the defeats inflicted by Napoleon (while inciting the same passion among the French). However, the victory also had the opposite effect, stoking up national pride in the new, united nation-state and a new belief in its rights in relation to its neighbours. Thus while Germany's problem in 1806 had been *defeat* in war, the temptation after 1870 was *victory* and the *hubris* that came from it.

But the mood in the country was more complex than simple triumphalism. After the first flush of pride in the victory over France, a general feeling of dissatisfaction set in. Many were unhappy at the triumph of Prussia and its regimented, despotic spirit. Engels had welcomed Bismarck's success in reducing German "particularism", but "the main disadvantage," he said, "and it is a very big one, is the inevitable swamping of Germany by the Prussian spirit". The liberals were unhappy that Germany was not a fully parliamentary state, but was still largely controlled by the king, the army and the Prussian aristocracy. Antisemites like Paul de Lagarde, on the other hand, were unhappy that Germany was becoming too liberal, and that the new unified German state was the "little" one, excluding Austria – whose inclusion, he believed, justified a great war. The Catholics were unhappy with Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* legislation on obligatory civil marriage and the prohibition of the Jesuit order, resistance to which caused most Prussian bishops and thousands of priests to be thrown into prison. Over all this was a vaguer feeling that something was rotten in the house of Germany with its "hard-boiled *Realpolitik* and oppressive piety, ostentatious theatrical poses, self-righteous nationalism combined with internal discord, and finally materialism, overwhelmed by the successes of the natural sciences, but yet

prepared suddenly to change into cheap mysticism".

The idea now emerged that the solution for Germany's malaise was *war.* War had humbled the old enemy and united the nation (almost). So why, it was felt, should it not continue to cure the nation's ills?

The roots of war-worship were to be found in Germany's not-so-distant past. Thus in his treatise *On War* (1832) the Prussian general Karl von Clausewitz had famously declared that "war is the continuation of politics by other means". Gradually the idea became entrenched that war is a cleansing process sweeping away the decadence that comes from too much peace. And there were more mystical reasons for supporting war. Thus Hegel considered that "the German spirit is the spirit of the new world. Its aim is the realization of absolute Truth as the unlimited self-determination of freedom." Clearly war could not be taboo to the advocates of "unlimited self-determination"…

As Barbara Ehrenreich writes: "In the opinion of Hegel and the later theorists of nationalism, nations need war – that is, the sacrifice of their citizens – even when they are not being menaced by other nations. The reason is simple: The nation, as a kind of 'organism', exists only through the emotional unity of its citizens, and nothing cements this unity more decisively than war. As Hegel explained, peace saps the strength of nations by allowing citizens to drift back into their individual concerns: 'In times of peace civil life expands more and more, all the different spheres settle down, and in the long run men sink into corruption, their particularities become more and more fixed and ossified. But health depends upon the unity of the body and if the parts harden, death occurs.' Meaning, of course, the death of the nation, which depends for its life on the willingness of the citizens to face their own deaths. War thus becomes a kind of tonic for nations, reviving that passion for collective defence that alone brings the nation to life in the minds of its citizens. Heinrich von Treitschke, the late-nineteenth-century German nationalist, put it excitedly: 'One must say in the most decided manner: "War is the only remedy for ailing nations!" The moment the State calls, "Myself and my existence are at stake!" social self-seeking must fall back and every party hate be silent. The individual must forget his own ego and feel himself a member of the whole… In that very point lies the loftiness of war, that the small man disappears entirely before the great thought of the State…'"

Fortunately, while Bismarck was no liberal, he was not a warmonger, either, defining politics, contrary to Clausewitz, as "the art of the possible". He did not look for *Lebensraum* either in the East or in the Balkans (influence there, he said, was "not worth the bones of a Pomeranian grenadier"), which meant that he did not come into conflict with Russia. Nor did he join in the scramble for colonies overseas.

Moreover, his nationalism was provincial, Prussian rather than pan-German, and he renounced the idea of a "greater Germany" that included Austria, which would really have destroyed the balance of power and created the political revolution Disraeli feared. In any case, not having Austria was no disadvantage in terms of power, because Prussia without Austria was so much more powerful than all the other German princes put together that the new state, in spite of its junior members' jealousy of Prussia, was never in danger of disintegration in the way that Austria-Hungary continued to be. Moreover, Austria was henceforth bound to depend on her more powerful "sister" if she was to retain her power in the face of Russia, and could be relied on not to enter into alliances with other great powers. With her complex mixture of nationalities, Germanic, Hungarian, Slav and Latin, Austria was weak; so it was not in her ally Germany's interests that she should be dissolved into her constituent nationalities, thereby creating conflicts and involving the great powers on different sides of the conflicts. Bismarck did not encourage Austria's forays into the Balkans, which might have started a disastrous war, with Russia on the side of the Slavs and Germany on the side of Austria. But that is precisely what happened in 1914...

So while Bismarck was at the helm of the German state, it was not likely that she would engage in rash military enterprises. Nevertheless, he did encourage militarism as a cultural tendency. For, as Richard Evans points out, "it was above all in order to protect the autonomy of the Prussian officer corps from liberal interference that Bismarck was appointed in 1862. He immediately announced that 'the great questions of the day are not decided by speeches and majority resolutions – that was the great mistake of 1848 and 1849 – but by iron and blood'. He was as good as his word. The war of 1866 destroyed the Kingdom of Hanover, incorporating it into Prussia, and expelled Austria and Bohemia from Germany after centuries in which they had played a major part in shaping its destinies, while the war of 1870-71 took away Alsace-Lorraine from France and placed it under the direct suzerainty of the German Empire. It is with some justification that Bismarck has been described as a 'white revolutionary'. Military force and military action created the Reich; and in so doing they swept aside legitimate institutions, redrew state boundaries and overthrew long-established traditions, with a radicalism and a ruthlessness that cast a long shadow over the subsequent development of Germany. They also thereby legitimized the use of force for political ends to a degree well beyond what was common in most other countries except when they contemplated imperial conquests in other parts of the world. Militarism in state and society was to play an important part in undermining German democracy in the 1920s and in the coming of the Third Reich.

"Bismarck saw to it that the army was virtually a state within a state, with

its own immediate access to the Kaiser and its own system of self-government. The Reichstag only had the right to approve its budget every seven years, and the Minister of War was responsible to the army rather than to the legislature. Officers enjoyed many social and other privileges and expected the deference of civilians when they met on the street. Not surprisingly, it was the ambition of many a bourgeois professional to be admitted as an officer in the army reserves; while, for the masses, compulsory military service produced familiarity with military codes of conduct and military ideals and values. In times of emergency, the army was entitled to establish martial law and suspend civil liberties, a move considered so frequently during the Wilhelmine period that some historians have with pardonable exaggeration described the politicians and legislators of the time as living under the permanent threat of a *coup d'état* from above.

"The army impacted on society in a variety of ways, most intensively of all in Prussia, then after 1871 more indirectly, through the Prussian example, in other German states as well. Its prestige, gained in the stunning victories of the wars of unification, was enormous. Non-commissioned officers, that is, those men, who stayed on after their term of compulsory military service was over and served in the army for a number of years, had an automatic right to a job in state employment when they finally left the army. This meant that the vast majority of policemen, postmen, railwaymen and other lower servants of the state were ex-soldiers, who had been socialized in the army and behaved in the military fashion to which they had become accustomed. The rule-book of an institution like the police force concentrated on enforcing military models of behaviour, insisted that the public be kept at arm's length and ensured that, in street marches and mass demonstrations, the crowd would be more likely to be treated like an enemy than an assembly of citizens. Military concepts of honour were pervasive enough to ensure the continued vitality of duelling among civilian men, even amongst the middle classes, though it was also common in Russia and France as well.

"Over time, the identification of the officer corps with the Prussian aristocracy weakened, and aristocratic military codes were augmented by new forms of popular militarism, including in the early 1900s the Navy League and the veterans' clubs. By the time of the First World War, most of the key positions in the officer corps were held by professionals, and the aristocracy was dominant mainly in traditional areas of social prestige and snobbery such as the cavalry and the guards, much as it was in other countries. But the professionalization of the officer corps, hastened by the advent of new military technology from the machine gun and barbed wire to the aeroplane and the tank, did not make it any more democratic. On the contrary, military arrogance was strengthened by the colonial experience, when German armed forces ruthlessly put down rebellion of indigenous

peoples such as the Hereros in German South-West Africa (now Namibia). In 1904-07, in an act of deliberate genocide, the German army massacred thousands of Herero men, women and children and drove many more of them into the desert, where they starved. From a population of some 80,000 before the war, the Hereros declined to a mere 15,000 by 1911 as a result of these actions. In an occupied part of the German Empire such as Alsace-Lorraine, annexed from France in 1871, the army frequently behaved like conquerors facing a hostile and refractory population. Some of the most flagrant examples of such behaviour had given rise in 1913 to a heated debate in the Reichstag, in which the deputies passed a vote of no-confidence in the government. This did not of course force the government to resign, but it illustrated none the less the growing polarization of opinion over the role of the army in German society."

The problems with Germany really began when William II came to the throne in 1888. He had had a difficult birth which gave him a withered arm; and he developed a hatred for his English mother and all things English. Unbalanced, aggressive, mendacious, provocative and inconsistent to the point of illness (Tsar Nicholas said he was "raving mad") , William had much to answer for in the division of Europe into two armed camps and the souring in relations between Germany and England, on the one hand, and between Germany and Russia, on the other. And yet it would be unjust to lay all the blame for World War One on this man or on his neurosis. He was a symbol and reflection of his country, but not the *cause* of her aggressiveness.

As Barbara Tuchman writes, "Envy of the older nations gnawed at him. He complained to Theodore Roosevelt that the English nobility on continental tours never visited Berlin but always went to Paris. He felt unappreciated. 'All the long years of my reign,' he told the King of Italy, 'my colleagues, the Monarchs of Europe, have paid no attention to what I have to say. Soon, with my great Navy to endorse my words, they will be more respectful.' The same sentiments ran through his whole nation, which suffered, like their emperor, from a terrible need for recognition. Pulsing with energy and ambition, conscious of strength, fed upon Nietzsche and Treitschke, they felt entitled to rule, and cheated that the world did not acknowledge their title. 'We must,' wrote Friedrich von Bernhardi, the spokesman of militarism, 'secure to German nationality and German spirit throughout the globe that high esteem which is due them… and has hitherto been withheld from them.' He frankly allowed only one method of attaining the goal; lesser Bernhardis from the Kaiser down sought to secure the esteem they craved by threats and show of power. They shook the 'mailed fist', demanded their 'place in the sun', and proclaimed the virtues of the sword in paeans to 'blood and iron' and 'shining armor'. In German practice Mr. Roosevelt's current precept for getting on with your neighbour was Teutonized to 'Speak loudly and brandish a big

gun'. When they brandished it, when the Kaiser told his troops departing for China and the Boxer Rebellion to bear themselves as the Huns of Attila (the choice of Huns as German prototypes was his own), when Pan-German Societies and Navy Leagues multiplied and met in congresses to demand that other nations recognize their 'legitimate aims' toward expansion, the other nations answered with alliances, and when they did, Germany screamed *Einkreisung!* – Encirclement! The refrain *Deutschland ganzlich einzukreisen* grated over the decade…"

An exception to the general mood of militarism was provided by the powerful Social Democratic party. But in Germany's fractured political system the Social Democrats were not able to prevent the nationalist and militarist forces of the Kaiser and the armed forces from taking control of the general direction of Germany foreign policy. From the late 1890s they abandoned Bismarck's exclusive concentration on Europe and adopted a policy known as *Weltpolitik*, or "World Policy". Already in 1894, as Bernard Simms writes, "radical nationalists set up the Pan-German League. The ambition of the bourgeois nationalist project, and its irritation with the restraint of government policy, was summed up by the rising German sociologist and economist Max Weber. 'We must realize,' he announced in his famous Freiburg Lecture of 1895, 'that the unification of Germany was a youthful prank which the nation played in its dotage, and should have avoided on account of its cost, if it was to have been the completion rather than the starting point of a bid for German global power.'" Germany, in the famous phrase of the Foreign Secretary, Bernhard von Bülow, had to have "her place in the sun".

David Stevenson writes: "Continental security was now no longer enough, and Wilhelm and his advisers ostentatiously asserted Germany's right to a voice in the Ottoman Empire (where he claimed to be the protector of the Muslims), in China (where Germany took a lease on the port of Jiaozhou), and South Africa (where Wilhelm supported the Afrikaners against British attempts to control them, sending a telegram of support to the president of the Transvaal, Paul Kruger, in 1896). *Weltpolitik*'s most substantial manifestation, however, was the Navy Laws of 1898 and 1900. With Reichstag approval Wilhelm's navy secretary, Alfred von Tirpitz, began building a new fleet of short-range battleships configured for action in the North Sea. Wilhelm, Tirpitz, and Bernhard von Bülow (chancellor from 1900 to 1909) did not intend to fight Britain but rather to apply leverage that would encourage it to come to terms and make concessions in a future crisis. Internally, they hoped the naval programme would rally the right-wing parties, the princely states, and the middle classes in support of monarchical authority.

"This reasoning was plausible at the turn of the century, when Britain was

at odds with Russia and France and an economic boom swelled tax revenues and made naval expansion affordable. Yet *Weltpolitik's* eventual impact on Germany's external security and domestic stability – and by extension on European peace – was disastrous. It antagonized London rather than intimidating it, and isolated Germany rather than Britain…"

According to W.H. Spellman, Wilhelm was moving Germany "into an aggressive and expansionist posture. In language reminiscent of eighteenth-century divine-right absolutism, he informed the Provincial Diet of Brandenburg in 1891, 'that I regard my whole position and my task as having been imposed on me from heaven, and that I am called to the service of a Higher Being, to Whom I shall have to give a reckoning later.' To Bismarck's successor William confided in 1892 that he was not interested in personal popularity (although his actions belied this), 'for, as the guiding principles of my actions, I have only the dictates of my duty and the responsibility of my clear conscience towards God'. In 1900 William told the future George V of England that as Kaiser he alone 'was master of German policy and my country must follow me wherever I go'. In the judgement of one recent observer the emperor personified the dynastic culture of later eighteenth-century Europe: 'He was a monarch by Divine Right yet always the parvenu; a medieval knight in shining armour and yet the inspiration behind that marvel of modern technology, the battle fleet; a dyed-in-the-wool reactionary yet also – for a time at least – the Socialist Emperor who supported basic accident and retirement insurance for the industrial worker.'"

A monarchical order was something that Russia and Germany had in common. But this was not sufficient to hold them together when, in 1892, the Kaiser dropped both Bismarck and his Reinsurance Treaty with Russia. This was, as Barbara Tuchman writes, "the first, and worst, blunder of his reign". For Tsar Alexander III "promptly turned round and entered into alliance with republican France, even at the cost of standing to attention at 'The Marseillaise'. Thus in 1892 he said: "We must indeed come to terms with the French, and, in the event of a war between France and Germany, at once attack the Germans so as not to give them the time first to beat France and then turn against us." Besides, he snubbed William, whom he considered '*un garcon mal élevé*', and would only talk to him over his shoulder…." William tried hard to heal the breach with Tsar Nicholas. But the damage was done; Nicholas was not about to reverse the decision of his father. After all, the alliance made good strategic sense for both parties. For, as Margaret Macmillan writes, France "was losing the demographic race with Germany" and wanted the alliance in part for Russia's "huge resources of manpower. In return Russia got French capital and French technology."

And indeed, from an economic point of view, the alliance was a great

success. "As the new century dawned," writes Niall Ferguson, "no diplomatic relationship was more solidly founded than the Franco-Russian alliance. It remains the classic illustration of an international combination based on credit and debit. French loans to Russia by 1914 totalled more than 3 billion roubles, 80 per cent of the country's total external debt. Nearly 28 per cent of all French overseas investment was in Russia, nearly all of it in state bonds.

"Economic historians used to be critical of the Russian government's strategy of borrowing abroad to finance industrialization at home. But it is very hard to find fault with the results. There is no question that the Russian economy industrialized with extraordinary speed in the three decades before 1914. According to Gregory's figures, net national product grew at an average rate of 3.3 per cent between 1885 and 1913. Annual investment rose from 8 per cent of national income to 10 per cent. Between 1890 and 1913 per capita capital formation rose 55 per cent. Industrial output grew at an annual rate of 4-5 per cent. In the period 1898-1913 pig iron production rose by more than 100 per cent; the railway network increased in size by some 57 per cent; and raw cotton consumption increased by 82 per cent. In the countryside too there was progress. Between 1860 and 1914 agricultural output grew at an average annual rate of 2 per cent. That was significantly faster than the rate of growth of population (1.5 per cent per annum). The population grew by around 10 per cent between 1900 and 1913; but total national income very nearly doubled…"

The industrial rise of Russia was in the interests of her ally, France. For the consuming passion of the French since the Franco-Prussian war was the recovery of the former French territories of Alsace-Lorraine from Germany, and this was clearly impossible without the support of a powerful Russia…

An important political motivation for the Franco-Russian alliance was the fear that Britain was getting too close to Germany, and feared a London-Berlin axis more than anything. Both France and Russia had colonial rivalries with Britain. Thus as recently as 1898 the French had quarrelled with the British over Egypt, and the Russians were competitors with British in North China and resented the Anglo-Japanese alliance. However, there were forces in French society that were against the alliance with Russia. Thus the Grand Orient of France, whose influence on French politics was increasing all the time (in 1901 Masons founded the Radical party and the party of the Radical Socialists), was concerned to effect a reconciliation between the French and German centres of Continental Masonry, a task made much more difficult by the nationalist passions on both sides.

"Evidence of this," writes O.F. Soloviev, "is provided by articles in the secret GOF journal, *L'Acacia*, which in many ways reflected the intentions of

the leadership of the Great Lodge of France and the Great Orient of France. The main editor and author of the editorial articles, writing under the name 'Hiram', was the well-known journalist S. Limousène (1840-1909), who touched on the influence of Franco-German relations on world politics. This brother was simultaneously in the lodges of the three French 'obediences' and was in close contact with their leaders, which gave an additional weight to his utterances and thoughts.

"At the beginning of 1904 *L'Acacia* published an article by Limousène entitled 'The Question of Alsace-Lorraine. Germany, France, Russia and Masonry', whose central thesis was that the reconciliation of the first two countries would have to come one day 'because of the necessity of agreeing for the sake of joint resistance to the Russian invasion', for the State structures of Russia and France were 'socially incompatible'. In the words of the author, the French were sympathetic only to the representatives of the Russian 'intelligentsia and revolutionaries'. Moreover, [the Russians] have, he said, a different mentality from ours, conditioned by life in 'the conditions of the most terrible and despotic regime, which is without any intellectual culture and unusually corrupted'. Moreover, even the Russians who are close [to us] in spirit believe in the inevitability of revolution, which will engender still more serious excesses and internal struggle than the revolution in France in 1789. In the end reaction will gain the upper hand thanks to 'the masses of muzhiks' – after all, the village population of Russia is much more backward than the French at the end of the 18th century. The result will be the expansion of Russia into Western Europe. But so far France helps Russia materially in the capacity of a friend and ally, which has allowed Moscow to build strategic railways while modernizing her weapons. There followed leisurely reflections on the striving of Russia to realize 'the dream of world hegemony that was cherished already by Peter I'.

"The objections that Nicholas II was a peace-loving person and the initiator of the Hague conference were declared to be unsustainable in view of Russia's predatory politics in Manchuria, which 'will unfailingly lead to war with Japan'. Besides, such a liberal monarch had destroyed representative institutions in Finland, although he had sworn to preserve them. He was also weak-willed and indecisive, like the executed French King Louis XVI. In a word, such an order was not only distinguished by despotism, but also disorganized the country. 'The genuine politics of Western Europe would have to consist in the dividing up of this colossus as long as it has not yet become too strong. It would have to use a possible revolution in order to re-establish Poland as a defensive rampart for Europe, while the rest of Russia would have to be divided into three or four states. Balance of power politics will remain the only fitting politics in the given conditions until the rise of the United States of Europe, which France will assist.' In conclusion, the article

noted that sooner or later, and without fail, 'France will have to be reconciled with Germany'."

However, France was *not* reconciled with Germany. And in spite of an almost entirely Masonic cabinet at the beginning of World War I, nationalist passions continued to keep not only the two governments, but even their Masonic lodges, at loggerheads. In other respects the article was remarkably farsighted, from the future dominance of Russia (albeit Soviet, not Tsarist Russia) to the importance of that quintessentially Masonic project, the United States of Europe. In one important respect, however, the article was quite wrong: in its estimate of the character of Tsar Nicholas II. He was neither weak-willed nor a war-monger nor a despot. But he was absolutely determined to uphold the traditional Orthodox world-view and bring it unharmed into the twentieth century. The Grand Orient knew that, and was determined to stop him. That is why the alliance between the Russian autocracy and the French republic was indeed unnatural.

Nevertheless, it endured, largely because of the economic benefits to both sides and because of the aggressive and unpredictable behaviour of the most powerful state in Europe – Germany. And it even remained a secret for many years. But when it became known it inevitably increased the risk of conflict with Germany insofar as the Germans now felt justified in feeling encircled…

The Russians, for their part, had no wish to antagonize Germany, with which they had important trade relations and a similar respect for monarchist institutions. The potential for conflict between Russia and the German-Austrian alliance had been dramatically decreased by the agreement made with Austria in 1897 to preserve the status quo in the Balkans. (The problem there was that while the Great Powers wanted to preserve the status quo, the smaller ones, especially Serbia, did not.)

Moreover, in 1899 the Tsar made it clear to the German Foreign Minister, von Bülow, that there was no reason for conflict between the two countries if Russia's interest in the Balkans was respected: "There is no problem that finds the interests of Germany and Russia in conflict. There is only one area in which you must recognize Russian traditions and take care to respect them, and that is the Near East. You must not create the impression that you intend to oust Russia politically and economically from the East, to which we have been linked for centuries by numerous national and religious ties. Even if I myself handle these matters with somewhat more scepticism and indifference, I still would have to support Russia's traditional interests in the East. In this regard I am unable to go against the heritage and aspirations of my people."

*

Russia's second major foreign-policy decision was to expand in the Far East, showing that her priorities now lay as much in Asia as in Europe… But why was Russia so interested in the *Far* East? The highest motive, Christian mission, certainly played a part. Russia had been baptizing the Asiatic peoples within and beyond her frontiers for some centuries. And among the greatest achievements of the late Russian Empire were the missions of St. Macarius (Nevsky) of the Altai, St. Nicholas of Japan, and St. Innocent of Alaska.

Nor was this ideal confined to churchmen. As Oliver Figes points out, Dostoyevsky had spoken of Russia's "civilizing mission in Asia": "Inspired by the conquest of Central Asia, Dostoevsky, too, advanced the notion that Russia's destiny was not in Europe, as had so long been supposed, but rather in the East. In 1881 he told the readers of his *Writer's Diary*: 'Russia is not only in Europe but in Asia as well… We must cast aside our servile fear that Europe will call us Asiatic barbarians and say that we are more Asian than European… This mistaken view of ourselves as exclusively Europeans and not Asians (and we have never ceased to be the latter)… has cost us very dearly over these two centuries, and we have paid for it by the loss of our spiritual independence… It is hard for us to turn away from our window on Europe; but it is a matter of our destiny… When we turn to Asia, with our new view of her, something of the same sort may happen to us as happened to Europe when America was discovered. With our push towards Asia we will have a renewed upsurge of spirit and strength… In Europe we were hangers-on and slaves [the words 'slave' and 'Slav' are etymologically identical], while in Asia we shall be the masters. In Europe we were Tatars, while in Asia we can be Europeans. Our mission, our civilizing mission in Asia will encourage our spirit and draw us on; the movement needs only to be started.' This quotation is a perfect illustration of the Russians' tendency to define their relations with the East in reaction to their self-esteem and status in the West. Dostoevsky was not actually arguing that Russia is an Asiatic culture; only that the Europeans thought of it as so. And likewise, his argument that Russia should embrace the East was not that it should seek to be an Asiatic force: but, on the contrary, that only in Asia could it find new energy to reassert its Europeanness. The root of Dostoevsky's turning to the East was the bitter resentment which he, like many Russians, felt at the West's betrayal of Russia's Christian cause in the Crimean War, when France and Britain had sided with the Ottomans against Russia to defend their own imperial interests. In the only published very he ever wrote (and the qualities of 'On the European Events of 1854' are such that one can see why this was so) Dostoevsky portrayed the Crimean War as the 'crucifixion of the Russian Christ'. But, as he warned the Western readers of his poem, Russia would

arise and, when she did so, she would turn toward the East in her providential mission to Christianize the world.

Unclear to you is her [Russia's] *predestination!*
The East – is hers! To her a million generations
Untiringly stretch out their hands…
And the resurrection of the ancient East
By Russia (so God had commanded) is drawing near."

Tsar Nicholas, writes Sebastian Sebag Montefiore, "saw the East as ripe for Russian expansion in the race for empire. China was disintegrating – though, locally, a resurgent Japan was keen to win its own empire. Just after Nicky's accession, Japan had defeated China in the First Sino-Japanese War. In one of his earliest decisions, Nicky, advised by Prince Alexei Lobanov-Rostovsky, the elderly grand seigneur who became foreign minister after Giers died, helped force Japan to give up some of its gains.

"Kaiser Wilhelm encouraged Nicky 'to cultivate the Asian Continent and defend Europe from the inroads of the Great Yellow Race', while both power would seize Chinese ports. Soon afterwards, Will sent Nicky his sketch showing Christian warriors fighting 'the Yellow Peril'.

"Finance Minister [Count Sergius] Witte, already the maestro of the Trans-Siberian Railway, planned to expand into Manchuria in northern China through his policy of *penetration pacifique*: he persuaded and bribed the Chinese to let Russia build an Eastern Chinese Railway into Manchuria. At almost the same time, Lobanov agreed with Japan to share influence in Korea…"

However, Witte, a man of talent and energy, was distrusted by the conservatives because he was a Jew and by the tsar because he was a Mason. Thus N.V. Muraviev, the Minister of Justice said that Witte, "thanks to his wife Matilda, a pure-blooded Jewess, has concluded a close union with the Jews and is confusing Russia… In his hands are special organs of his secret police… He is preparing, if there were to be a change of reign, to take power into his own hands. He has… influence everywhere." Witte's foreign policy was frankly secular and imperialist, being closer to that of General A.A. Kireev: "We, like any powerful nation, strive to expand our territory, our 'legitimate' moral, economic and political influence. This is in the order of things…"

"As the main architect of Russia's industrialization," writes Richard Pipes, "[Witte] was eager to ensure foreign markets for her manufactured goods. In his judgement, the most promising export outlets lay in the Far East, notably

China. Witte also believed that Russia could provide a major transit route for cargo and passengers from Western Europe to the Pacific, a potential role of which she had been deprived by the completion in 1869 of the Suez Canal. With these objectives in mind, he persuaded Alexander III to authorize a railway across the immense expanse of Siberia. The Trans-Siberian, begun in 1886, was to be the longest railroad in the world. [Tsar] Nicholas, who sympathized with the idea of Russia's Far Eastern mission, endorsed and continued the undertaking. Russia's ambitions in the Far East received warm encouragement from Kaiser Wilhelm II, who sought to divert her attention from the Balkans, where Austria, Germany's principal ally, had her own designs.

"In the memoirs he wrote after retiring from public life, Witte claimed that while he had indeed supported a vigorous Russian policy in the Far East, he had in mind exclusively economic penetration, and that his plans were wrecked by irresponsible generals and politicians. This thesis, however, cannot be sustained in the light of the archival evidence that has surfaced since. Witte's plans for economic penetration of the Far East were conceived in the spirit of imperialism of the age: it called for a strong military presence, which was certain sooner or later to violate China's sovereignty and come into conflict with the imperial ambitions of Japan…"

Witte succeeded in persuading the Tsar to his point of view. Thus "before 1904," writes Dominic Lieven, "Nicholas's priorities in terms of foreign policy were clear. Unlike Russians of so-called pan-Slav sympathy, he did not believe that his country's manifest destiny lay in the Balkans, nor did he feel that Petersburg must necessarily support the Balkan Slavs just because they were people of the same race and religion. The Emperor was determined that, should the Ottoman Empire collapse, no other power must steal Constantinople, thereby barring Russia's route out of the Black Sea and assuming a dominant position in Asia Minor. To avoid such a possibility in 1896-7 he was even willing to contemplate very dangerous military action. But, above all, Nicholas was intent on developing Russia's position in Siberia and the Far East. Particularly after 1900, his personal imprint on Russia's Far Eastern policy became very important."

Up to this time, Russia's eastward expansion had been largely peaceful, and had been accompanied by the one true justification of imperialism – missionary work. However, already before 1900 Russia had begun to act in relation to Far Eastern races in a similar spirit to the other imperialist western powers. Thus at the railway station in Khabarovsk, on the Siberian-Chinese border, "foreign visitors were reminded of British India: 'Instead, however, of British officers walking up and down with the confident stride of superiority while the Hindus … give way… there were Russian officers clean and smart

promenading while the… cowering and cringing… Koreans made room for them… The Russian… is the white, civilized Westerner, whose stride is that of the conqueror.'

"Chinese workers were indispensable when it came to the bigger jobs too, not least railway construction and shipbuilding. In 1900 nine out of ten workers in the Vladivostok shipyards were Chinese. Yet Russian administrators felt no compunction about expelling surplus Asians in order to maintain Russian dominance… As Nikolai Gondatti, the governor of Tomsk, explained in 1911: 'My task is to make sure that there are lots of Russians and few yellows here…"

Russia was now caught up in imperialist rivalry with other western powers. Thus when Germany took Kiaochow from China in 1898 (formally speaking, it was leased from China, but in effect this was a land grab), the Russians were furious. "Military action against Germany, the Russian government admitted to itself, was not really an option. The new foreign minister, Muraviev, proposed that instead Russia send warships to take over the nearby Chinese port of Port Arthur. Witte opposed the idea; sending ships and troops ran absolutely counter to his plan to create a sphere of influence in Manchuria by promising friendly diplomatic support and loans. It made his previous inroads look dishonest, it would be expensive, and it would instantly alert the British to Russia's intentions. Initially Nicholas listened to Witte. But Muraviev went behind Witte's back, asked for a private audience and convinced the emperor to send the ships because the 'yellow races' understood only force. The Russians sailed into Port Arthur weeks later. 'Thank God we managed to occupy Port Arthur… without blood, quietly and almost amicably!' Nicholas wrote to his brother George. 'Of course, it was risky, but had we missed those docks now, it would be impossible later to kick out the English or the Japanese without a war. Yes, one has to look sharp, there on the Pacific Ocean lies the whole future of the development of Russia and at last we have a fully open warm water port…"

Retribution for the unlawful seizure of Port Arthur would come only a few years later…

Meanwhile, in 1900, the Boxer Uprising against western influence broke out in China. Among the victims of the Uprising were 222 Chinese Orthodox from the Russian Spiritual Mission in Peking were martyred. To some, the preaching of the Gospel in the greatest and most inaccessible of the pagan empires, China, and its first-fruits in the form of the Chinese martyrs, indicated that *the end was coming*, in fulfillment of the Lord's words: "This Gospel of the Kingdom will be preached throughout the whole world, *and then the end will come* (Matthew 24.14)…

The Boxers, backed by Chinese troops, "besieged the embassies in Peking and then spread along Russia's Manchurian Railway. Nicky joined Germany, Britain, America and Japan in sending an expeditionary force to relieve the embassies, but he was quick to withdraw. 'The happiest day of my life will be when we leave Peking and get out of that mess.' Yet it was just starting: he had to protect 'Witte's kingdom' and railway in Manchuria. Now the Boxers attacked the Russian headquarters in Harbin. In June, Nicholas sent 170,000 troops into Manchuria – the end of Witte's *penetration pacifique.* 'I'm glad,' wrote [War Minister Alexei Nikolayevich] Kuropatkin, 'this will give us an excuse for seizing Manchuria.'

"This run of opportunistic successes – intervention against Japan in 1895, annexation of Port Arthur and now expansion into Manchuria – encouraged the imperial ambitions of Nicholas, who forced the Chinese to sign over Manchuria for many years and planned to seize Korea as well. 'I don't want Korea for myself,' he explained, 'but neither can I countenance the Japanese setting foot there. Were they to try, that would be a *casus belli.*

"These adventures, Witte rudely told the tsar, were 'child's play which will end disastrously'. Nicholas resented him and made his own private plans. As he told his secret adviser, his father's friend Prince Meshchersky: 'I'm coming to believe in myself.'"

Russia's conquest of Manchuria, according to Lieven, was pure commercial imperialism: Russia poured troops into Manchuria "to protect Witte's precious railway. Once in possession of Manchuria Petersburg was disinclined to retreat, at least until absolute security could be guaranteed to its railway and the Chinese would concede Russia's economic domination of the province. This Peking was unwilling to do. Its stand was strongly backed by Britain, the USA and Japan, all of which demanded free access for foreign trade to Manchuria. The signatories of the Anglo-Japanese alliance, clearly directed against Russia, in January 1902 further stiffened Chinese resolve."

Moreover, a related event had undermined her moral standing. During the Boxer rebellion, certain Russian military commanders in Blagoveshchensk on the Amur had driven some thousands of Chinese out of the city and into the river, which showed that Russia had begun to be infected by the racist and imperialist spirit of the pseudo-Christian West.

The Church now began to speak out. Thus Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), although a monarchist, "was profoundly saddened by this event and foretold that it was precisely there, in the Far East, that we were bound to await the special punishment of God. The text of this prophecy has

unfortunately not been found, but Vladyka Anthony himself spoke about it in his sermon before the service at the conclusion of peace with Japan [in 1905]. Pointing to the fact that the unsuccessful war with Japan was God's punishment for the apostasy of Russian society from the age-old foundations of Russian life, Vladyka Anthony said: '… I will speak about the fact that it is not only the traitors of the fatherland that are guilty before God, I will say what I said five years ago, when I foretold that it would be precisely there, in the Far East, that we had to expect a particular punishment of God. But I will speak not with evil joy, as do our enemies, but with sadness and with shame, as a Christian and a Russian priest. In Blagoveshchensk, on the Amur, five years ago, we permitted a cruel action to take place. Several thousand Chinese, who were in service to Russian citizens, for the general security of the latter, were deceitfully led out of the city and forced into the river, where they found inescapable death… It was not for this that the Lord opened up before us the confines of the Far East, from the Volga to the sea of Okhotsk, so that we amazed the foreigners by our heartlessness. On the contrary, it is there, in the East, and not in the West, that lies the missionary and even messianic calling of our people. Russians did not want to understand this calling – not simple people, of course, but people who consider themselves enlightened, who, following the example of their western enlighteners, would not allow themselves the slightest rudeness in relation to any European rascal, but do not consider humble, straightforward and industrious inhabitants of the East even to be people. We were bound to reveal to them Christ, we were bound to show them the Russian breadth of spirit, Russian love of man, Russian trustingness, but we showed them only animal self-preservation that does not stop before anything. This is our first guilt, for God even in the Old Testament imputed the sinful fall of a people's military commanders to the whole people.'"

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Notwithstanding his misguided policy in the Far East, Tsar Nicholas was a peacemaker by nature, and early in his reign he suggested that all nations come together in order to cut their military forces and submit to general arbitration on international disputes. "The preservation of universal peace," he wrote, "and the reduction in weapons that weigh on all the peoples is, in the present situation, a goal to which the efforts of all governments should strive." Military expenses were an ever-increasing burden on the peoples, disrupting their prosperity. "Hundreds of millions are spent on the acquisition of terrible means of destruction which, while considered the last word in science today, must lose all value tomorrow in view of new inventions… Thus as the weapons of each state grow, they answer less and less to the goals put forward by governments."

The Tsar's proposal was well-timed; for powerful peace movements were developing in many countries, and the burden of military expenditure was indeed increasing. So the Hague Peace Conference was convened on May 18, 1899, and was attended by representatives of 26 nations. Several useful resolutions were passed by the 1899 conference and its follow-up in 1907. Thus, as Sir Richard Evans writes, they "laid down an important series of ground rules for limiting the damage caused by war. They banned the killing of prisoners and civilians, and declared that an occupying force was the guardian of the cultural heritage of the areas it conquered, and should not loot or destroy cultural artifacts."

"However," writes O.F. Soloviev, "at the very beginning Germany made clear her lack of desire even to consider the central question of disarmament, in spite of the intentions of the other participants. Kaiser Wilhelm II made a sensational speech in Wiesbaden in which he declared that the best guarantee of peace was 'a sharpened sword'. Then, for the sake of consensus, the remaining delegates, at the suggestion of the Frenchman L. Bourgeois (1851-1926), a former president of the council of ministers and a Mason, limited themselves to accepting an evasive formula on the extreme desirability of 'limiting the military burdens which now weigh on the world for the sake of improving both the material and the moral prosperity of mankind'.

"After this the attention of delegates was concentrated on the third commission, which discussed problems of arbitration under the presidency of the same Bourgeois, with [Jacques] Decan [a member of the Grand Orient of Belgium], as secretary. As a result of these efforts, which were supported by other governments, success was obtained in paralysing the attempts of the Germans completely to exclude the application of arbitration procedures in the regulation of conflicts. In the preambule to the convention on 'the peaceful resolution of international conflicts', which was unanimously accepted, it was noted that the conference had been convened on the initiative of 'the most august monarch', Nicholas II, whose thoughts it was necessary to strengthen by an agreement on the principles of right and justice, on which 'the security of states and the prosperity of peoples' rested. The first article of the first section 'On the Preservation of Universal Peace' made the following provision: 'With the aim of averting, if possible, the turning to force in the mutual relations between states, the signatory powers agree to apply all their efforts to guarantee a peaceful resolution of international disagreements.'… Decan in his report to the commission was apparently the first to use the term 'League of Nations' to apply to the union of state approving of similar documents. Later the term was more and more widely used long before the creation, after the First World War, of an international organization of that name."

The Tsar's initiative was a noble one, as the American President Warren Harding officially acknowledged in 1921; and it was not without long-term consequences that are discernible today. Nevertheless, the fact was that there was no way in which the two great opposing ideological forces of Europe – Russian Orthodox Tsarism and Continental Freemasonry – could work together for long. The idea of a League of Nations was essentially a way of limiting the power of sovereign nations, and this could not be in the long-term interests of Russia – or of the world as a whole, insofar as such a League was in essence the embryo of a world government which the Freemasons with their anti-monarchist and anti-Christian ideology would have a much better chance of controlling than Russia. Already in 1899, the tsar found himself having to fend off some undesirable suggestions on arms limitation, and within six months he had evidently cooled towards the idea of arbitration – he sent large numbers of troops into Manchuria without presenting his dispute with China to the court. Nor did the British think of arbitration before launching their war against the Boers. The fact was, "no European government would accept the idea of arms reduction."

It was not only the nationalists that hindered the attempts of tsars and statesmen to stop the arms race and prevent war. Socialist workers also consistently placed national pride above the international solidarity of the working class. Thus the Second International's numerous attempts to force governments to reduce armaments and stop fighting were undermined by the conflicting nationalisms of French and German workers, Bulgarian and Serb workers, Austrian and Italian and Czech workers.

Only the Russian socialists appeared to have no difficulty in placing class above nation – perhaps because so many of them were Jews… On the eve of the First World War, the assassination of the great French socialist and internationalist Jean Jaurès symbolised the failure of socialism in the face of nationalism. But when the nationalists had exhausted themselves, the path would be open for the only completely consistent internationalist – because he hated all nations equally – Vladimir Lenin….

33. THE LIBERATION MOVEMENT

Since the reign of Tsar Alexander II, the Russian government had encouraged, within limits, the development of local government in the towns and countryside. But the *zemstva*, as these organs of local government were called, were infected with the virus of liberal constitutionalism. And from the beginning of the twentieth century this constitutionalism began to develop into something more serious in the form of what became known as the "Liberation Movement"…

The *zemstva's* 70,000 teachers, doctors, statisticians and agronomists, collectively known as the "Third Element" (as opposed to the first two elements, the administrators and elected deputies), inculcated liberal ideas in the young. The Interior Minister Plehve called them "the cohorts of the *sans-culottes*"; he believed that, coming themselves from a peasant or lower-class background, they were trying to use their position in the *zemstva* to stir up the peasantry. The radical schoolteachers raised a whole generation of radical schoolchildren. Their influence on millions of the younger generation was undoubtedly one of the main causes of the revolution.

Alexander III and Pobedonostsev made valiant attempts to counter this corrupting influence by encouraging and financing a vast web of church-parish schools, a policy continued by Nicholas II. However, the struggle was an unequal one: the *zemstvo* schools had more money, and not all the church-parish schools were of the highest quality in view of the fact that some Church teachers had also been infected by liberal ideas.

The authorities' fear of the influence of the *zemstva* was well founded. But they did not always treat them with discretion. "In February 1895 a polite *zemstvo* delegation from the province of Tver petitioned the tsar that 'the expression of the needs and thought not only of the administration but of the Russian people may reach to the height of the throne'. The British ambassador in St. Petersburg noted that their words had been 'couched in the most loyal language and merely expressed the hope that the *zemstvo* might prove the means of direct communication between His Majesty and the People'. But the minister of the interior had told the tsar that it was an infringement of his prerogatives and an implied criticism of his father's policies. Nicholas decided it represented a dangerous precedent, an attempt to take part in government. Replying to the *zemstvo's* petition, he dismissed it as 'senseless dreams'. 'I shall maintain the principle of autocracy just as firmly and unflinchingly as it was preserved by my unforgettable dead father,' he added. In government circles it was understood that the speech had been written by Alexander III's

most reactionary adviser, Pobedonostsev. 'The speech had created a most unfavourable impression,' the British ambassador wrote; 'the most distressing impression,' echoed a senior Russian diplomat…"

In 1897 the "Universal Jewish Workers' Union in Russia, Poland and Lithuania", otherwise known as the Bund, was founded. In the spring of the next year the Russian Social-Democratic Party was founded, with the active participation of the Bund. This new party was joined by the young Vladimir Lenin, who had become an ardent revolutionary since his brother Alexander had been executed in 1887 for taking part in a plot to assassinate the Tsar. He was imprisoned in 1895 and later exiled. In 1900 he returned, becoming the editor of a newspaper, *Iskra*, meaning "spark" with which he hope to unite the underground and spark a revolution…

In 1899 *zemstvo* leaders formed a discussion group called *Beseda* (Symposium). The next year the government ordered the dismissal of those *zemstvo* deputies who were becoming involved in political questions. In 1901 in Germany a confidential memorandum by Witte calling for the abolition of the *zemstv*a as being incompatible with autocracy was published.

In 1902, also in Germany, the author of the founding manifesto of the Social-Democratic Party, Peter Struve, founded the journal *Osvobozhdenie (Liberation),* and in 1904 some of his supporters founded the Union of Liberation (*Soiuz Osvobozhdeniia*) to promote constitutionalism and civil rights. The "liberationists", though more moderate than the Social-Democrats, who refused to cooperate with them, nevertheless sowed considerable discontent with the government among the people.

But Struve was no gentle liberal. His declaration at the founding of the Social Democratic Party concluded with the following words: "The Russian proletariat can win political freedom for itself only by itself, and it will overthrow the autocracy, so as then with greater energy to continue the struggle with capitalism and the bourgeoisie until the final victory of Socialism…"

In 1903 the SDs held a congress in Brussels and London at which they split into two groups, the Bolsheviks led by Lenin and the Mensheviks led by Martov. "Not until 1912," writes Alan Bullock, "did Lenin force a final break with the Mensheviks. The basic issue, however, on which all attempts at unity broke down remained the same as in 1903.

"Both groups accepted Marx's scheme of historical development and believed that Russia must go through the stage of capitalism as a necessary condition for a socialist revolution. But they could not agree on what followed

after that. The Mensheviks believed that, in view of Russia's economic backwardness, it would take a long time before such a revolution would take place, and that the immediate task was to work for a middle class liberal revolution. This would get rid of the autocratic Tsarist regime, clear the way for capitalism to fulfil its historic role of industrialization and at the same time secure constitutional reforms allowing the legal growth of a mass working class on the lines of the German Social Democrats.

"Lenin was not prepared to wait or leave it to historical processes by themselves to produce the socialist revolution on which all his thoughts were concentrated. To Mensheviks this was an anti-Marxist heresy, a conspiratorial reliance on 'subjective factors' such as the revolutionary will, instead of on Marx's 'objective factors, the laws of social development, which he had worked out and which could not be artificially speeded up…"

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Liberationist agitation in the upper classes of society quickly communicated itself downwards, first to the liberals' children of student age, and then to other classes of society.

Thus in 1899 the university students in St. Petersburg and other major cities went on strike. "If," writes Richard Pipes, "one wishes to identify events that not merely foreshadowed 1917 but led directly to it, then the choice has to fall on the disorders that broke out at Russian universities in February, 1899. Although they were soon quelled by the usual combination of concessions and repression, these disorders set in motion a movement of protest against the autocracy that did not abate until the revolutionary upheaval of 1905-6. This First Revolution was also eventually crushed but at a price of major political concessions that fatally weakened the Russian monarchy. To the extent that historical events have a beginning, the beginning of the Russian Revolution may well have been the general university strike of February 1899."

It is significant that this disorder should have begun with those who had not yet completed their education and had not yet received the wisdom that experience of life gives. There is much in the revolution that resembles the rebellion of an adolescent against his parents. In a healthy society such a rebellion is frowned upon and checked; for it overturns the normal order. The tragedy of these years was that the elders followed the younger, not daring to seem "behind the times", to resist "progress".

Thus S.S. Oldenburg writes: "Society did not respond in any way to his Majesty's reconciliatory moves [towards the students]. It continued to

sympathize with the strike. Only the editor of *New Times*, A.S. Suvorov, was bold enough to write against it: 'If the government had let the young people's strike take its natural course, that is, if it had said, 'If you don't want to study, then don't study', then it would not have harmed itself in its higher education, but would have put the young students in a difficult position, leaving them without education and without the support of the field of social activity which they were counting on.' Almost the whole of the rest of the press hurled itself at *New Times* for these lines…"

The Tsar himself, after receiving a report on the strikes, apportioned blame both to the students and to the police and to the university administrators. And he did not forget the role that society had played: "To our sorrow, during the disturbances that have taken place, local society has not only not supported the efforts of the state authorities,… but in many instances has assisted the disorders, stirring up the excited youths with their approval and permitting themselves to interfere in an inappropriate way in the sphere of state directives. Such disturbances cannot be tolerated in the future and must be put down without any weakening by strict government measures." However, the pattern was set of agitators being supported by the press and society. From now on, the Tsar had increasingly to govern without the support of the newspaper-reading public, while the universities now became hot-houses of revolutionary agitation to such an extent that many students were no longer interested in academic studies but only in politics.

An important role in teaching the young to rebel was played by foreign revolutionaries. As General V.N. Voeikov writes: "In his *Notes of a Revolutionary*, Prince Kropotkin gives a completely clear indication under whose direction our Russian youth abroad 'developed'. Thanks to his sincerity, we can form an accurate picture of who in Switzerland worked on the leaders of our revolutionary movement: the centre of the Internationale was Geneva. The Geneva sections gathered in a huge Masonic temple 'Temple Unique'. During the large meetings the spacious hall accommodated more than two thousand people, which served as an indicator of the quantity of young people thirsting for enlightenment. The French émigré-communards taught the workers for free; they went on courses in history, physics, mechanics, etc. Time was also given to participation in sections that sat during the evenings in side-rooms of this temple of science."

We have seen that sons of priests formed the largest section in the university student population; and the strong representation from the priestly caste in the revolutionary movement was a striking sign of the times. Chernyshevsky, Dobroliubov and Nechaiev were early examples. Joseph Stalin was the most famous example of all…

In 1894, as Alan Bullock writes, Stalin became "one of the 600 students at the Russian Orthodox theological seminary in Tiflis. The Tsarist authorities had refused to allow a university to be opened in the Caucasus, fearing that it would become a centre for nationalist and radical agitation. The Tiflis seminary served as a substitute, and was attended by many young men who had no intention of entering the priesthood…

"… The official policy of Russification made the seminary a stronghold of Georgian nationalism. A student expelled for his anti-Russian attitude in 1886 had assassinated the Principal, and only a few months before Stalin's admission a protest strike of all the Georgian pupils led to the seminary's closure by the police and the expulsion of eight-seven students…

"… [Stalin's[daughter Svetlana wrote after his death: 'A church education was the only systematic education my father ever had. I am convinced that the seminary in which he spent more than ten years played an immense role, setting my father's character for the rest of his life, strengthening and intensifying inborn traits.

"'My father never had any feeling for religion. In a young man who had never for a moment believed in the life of the spirit or in God, endless prayers and enforced religious training could only produce contrary results… From his experiences at the seminary he came to the conclusion that men were intolerant, coarse, deceiving their flocks in order to hold them in obedience; that they intrigued, lied and as a rule possessed numerous faults and very few virtues.'

"One form which Stalin's rebellion took was spending as much time as possible reading illicit books obtained from a lending library in the town and smuggled into the seminary. Besides Western literature in translation, and the Russian classics – also forbidden – Stalin became acquainted with radical and positivist ideas which he is said to have picked up from reading translations of Darwin, Comte and Marx, as well as Plekhanov, the first Russian Marxist.

"Growing discontented with the vague romantic ideals of Georgian nationalism, Stalin organized a socialist study circle with other students, including Iremashvili, and according to the latter soon began to show intolerance towards any member who disagreed with him. He found a natural attraction in the Marxist teaching of the inevitability of class war and the overthrow of an unjust and corrupt social order. The attraction was as much psychological as intellectual, appealing to the powerful but destructive emotions of hatred and resentment which were to prove so strong force in Stalin's character, and offering a positive outlet for an ambition and abilities which would otherwise have been frustrated. As Robert Tucker wrote, the

gospel of class war legitimized his resentment against authority: 'it identified his enemies as history's'."

One of Stalin's friends at seminary was Gutsa Parkhadze, who wrote: "We youngsters had a passionate thirst for knowledge. Thus, in order to disabuse the minds of our seminary students of the myth that the world was created in six days, we had to acquaint ourselves with the geological origin and age of the earth to be able to prove them in argument; we had to familiarize ourselves with Darwin's teachings. We were aided in this by Lyles' *Antiquity and Men*, and Darwin's *Descent of Man,* the latter in a translation edited by Sechenov. Comrade Stalin read Sechenov's works with great interest.

"We gradually proceeded to a study of class society, which led us to the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin. In those days, the reading of Marxist literature was punishable as revolutionary propaganda. The effect of this was particularly felt in the seminary, where even the name of Darwin was always mentioned with scurrilous abuse. Comrade Stalin brought these books to our notice. The first thing we had to do, he would say, was to become atheists."

Another member of Stalin's group was Lado Ketshoveli, who was a ringleader in the revolt that led to the closing down of the seminary, founded the first underground Marxist press in Transcaucasia, and in 1902 was arrested and shot dead by guards after shouting from his cell window: "Down with the autocracy! Long live freedom! Long live socialism!" "To Stalin he still remained, many years afterwards, the exemplar of a revolutionary fighter and his influence no doubt helped to precipitate Stalin's break with the seminary. By his fifth year the school authorities regarded Stalin as a hardened troublemaker, and he was expelled in May 1899 on the ground that 'for unknown reasons' he failed to appear for the end-of-year examinations. Iremashvili, who had accompanied him to the seminary, wrote later that he took with him 'a grim and bitter hatred against the school administration, the bourgeoisie and everything in the country that represented Tsarism'."

It is obviously dangerous and unjust to draw any general conclusions about the nature of seminary education from Stalin's example alone. Nevertheless, the fact that so many former seminarians, sons of priests and even priests joined the revolutionary movement – another important example is Gapon in the 1905 revolution - indicated that something was wrong in the Church. The seminaries themselves – especially those in Pskov, Volhynia and Tambov – became regular trouble-spots throughout the first decade of the century, with strikes, violence and even some shootings of teachers.

Could the radicalism at the bottom of the hierarchy have had something to

do with liberalism at the top? Could the lack of zeal of the leaders of the Church be influencing the followers to look for certainty elsewhere? If so, then only a revival of zeal for the truth of Christianity would be able to quench zeal for the falsehood of the revolution…

34. ST. JOHN OF KRONSTADT AND THE RENOVATIONISTS

The traditional mainstays of Tsarist Russia had been the peasantry and the Church. And the Church in turn gained much from the support of the State. However, it was increasingly accepted that while the Church should be *supported* by the State, she should not *depend* on it, financially and administratively, to the degree imposed on her by Peter the Great's *Spiritual Regulation,* which had abolished the patriarchate and made the Church almost a department of the State. Indeed, by the turn of the century it had become almost an article of faith among the Church and near-Church intelligentsia that Church-State relations needed a thorough overhaul in order to bring them closer to the "symphonic" ideal inherited from Byzantium.

However, this movement was opposed by Pobedonostsev, who feared that a reform of Church-State relations, even if desirable in itself from a canonical point of view, might lead to Church-State *separation* and the gradual dechristianisation of society. Sergei Firsov writes: "Pobedonostsev saw and understood better than many that the demolishing of the Petrine Synodal system in Russian conditions would not lead to the recreation of correct mutual relations between the Church and the State, but would only strengthen anti-government forces. To represent the Church and the kingdom as existing in isolation from each other was psychologically impossible, while any changes in the ecclesiastical structure could be understood by 'the simple people' only as the abolition of the previous Church-State relationship [because 'for our peasant form is everything']. It was not by chance that Pobedonostsev, while talking with General A.A. Kireev about Church problems and 'about learning', declared that what he feared above all was a new schism: 'It's fine for you, but where shall we go with our darkness, with the peasant. I fear a schism, that's what I fear!'"

It is not clear whether he meant a Church schism, or a schism between the peasants and the State. In either case, the peasant uprisings of 1905 showed that the venerable old man had a point… However, there was a contradiction in Pobedonostev's position. On the one hand, he sincerely believed that the Church was the soul of the State and the people, and should be its teacher, corrector and inspirer. On the other hand, he acted as if he did not believe this, but rather that the Church should be tutored and disciplined by the State, and that he himself, as the representative of the State, should act as the task-master of the Church hierarchy…

Tsar Nicholas, with his deep love of pre-Petrine Russia, took a close interest in this question. He believed in giving the Church more freedom, and that that freeing the Church from the dead hand of the State would ultimately be to the benefit of both Church and State. But, perhaps under the influence of

his former tutor, Pobedonostsev, he acted cautiously. Nevertheless, one of the most important measures of his reign was his removal from the Constitution in 1901 of the phrase describing him as "Supreme Judge" of the Church. And, as we shall see, if political events had not intervened, it is likely that this would have been only the first step in a far-ranging reform of Church-State relations, bringing them back to true "symphony".

The movement for Church reform first manifested itself publicly in 1901, when, somewhat reluctantly, Pobedonostsev allowed the convening of a series of religio-philosophical meetings between the "God-searching" intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. These meetings - the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev - were an attempt to respond to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. Unfortunately, however, the conversion was, as often as not, not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. For Russia at that time was teeming with false teachers and prophets: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky, freethinkers and heretics such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy or the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, theosophists such as Blavatsky and the "silver age" poets, and a huge army of masons, liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists who were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State.

Thus M. Rodzianko writes that "among the intelligentsia, especially of St. Petersburg, all kinds of groups began to organize, often infected by sectarianism. Simultaneously the enthusiasm for the teaching of Redstock, the passion for theosophy, occultism, spiritism and other teachings condemned by the Church was considerable. During the period after 1901 the society of 'Argonauts' was formed, which met at the home of Andrew Bely, an author of that period. This is how he describes those times: 'Among the "unseeing", "seers" appeared, who recognized each other; they were drawn to share incomprehensible knowledge with each other; their interest in everything appeared new to them, encompassed with rays of cosmic and historical importance. The "seers" differed in their conjectures: one was an atheist, another a theosophist, one was drawn to piety, another was pulled away from it, but all agreed one with the other as to the imminence of a dawning: "something is shining forth", and from this "something" the future will unfold its destinies' (*Epopee,* vol. 1, pp. 136-137). This dawn was disclosed as the goddess Sophia and this in fact becam the beginning, the 'disclosure' by the Russian progressive society of the object of its worship, tearing it away from Orthodoxy, i.e. from the Church, in order to begin a 'philosophical' combat with it. Numbered among the 'Argonauts' we meet the following widely known people: the poet Balmont, Valery Bryusov, Baltushaytis, S.I. Taneyev, N.A. Berdyaev, S.N. Bulgakov, later a priest, D.V. Filosofov, prof.

Kadlukov, D.N. Merezhkovsky, Igor Kistyakovsky, Z.N. Hippius, A.V. Kartashev, Theodore Sologub and others (*Epopee*, vols. 1,2 and 3; pp. 179, 191, 181, 144). The Russian intelligentsia of that time, knowingly or not, was undermining the age-old foundations of the Russian Orthodox Church. The guiding center was the 'Religious-Philosophical Society', created during this period [in 1901]. In this society were: V. Ivanov, D.V. Filosofov, S. Kablukov, Merezhkovsky, Rozanov, Kartashev, Bulgakov, Berdyaev and others (*Epopee*, vol. 1, pp. 61, 130, 156). This society held closed as well as open meetings, having as its goal the wide propaganda of the spirit of the revolution, reformation and sophianism…"

These meetings were permitted, somewhat reluctantly, by Pobedonostsev between the "God-searching" intelligentsia and the clergy in St. Petersburg. They were the idea of D.S. Merezhkovsky, V.V. Rozanov and a Synodal official, V.A. Ternavtsev, and were an attempt to respond to a definite turning away of a part of the intelligentsia from sixties-style positivism to some kind of religion. Unfortunately, however, the conversion was, as often as not, not to Orthodoxy but to some vague kind of mysticism or theosophy. For Russia at that time was teeming with false teachers and prophets: revolutionaries such as Lenin and Trotsky, freethinkers and heretics such as the novelist Lev Tolstoy or the philosopher Vladimir Soloviev, theosophists such as Blavatsky and the "silver age" poets, and a huge army of masons, liberals, nihilists, anti-monarchists and ecumenists who were busy undermining the foundations of Church and State. Even when the <u>intelligenty</u> did convert to Orthodoxy, as when the philosophers Bulgakov, Berdiaev, Frank and Struve converted from Marxism, it was not to a pure, patristic Orthodoxy, as is proved by the "renovationist Orthodoxy" of Bulgakov and Berdiaev after the revolution.

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Nevertheless, if these "God-seekers" were ever to acquire true Orthodoxy, they needed to encounter the Church in her more learned representatives. Hence the significance of the religio-philosophical meetings, which were chaired by a rising star of the Russian Church, Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky, the future first patriarch of the Sovietized Moscow Patriarchate.

"Sergius," writes G.M. Soldatov, "was popular in circles waiting for the introduction of 'democratic' reforms in the State. In his sermons and speeches he criticized the relationship between the ecclesiastical and state authorities in the Russian Empire." This would have been a risky subject to raise only ten years earlier; but times were changing rapidly, and Sergius, as his future career proved, was always sensitive to how the times were changing, and accommodated himself to them accordingly…

At the same time he did make a fair point in the eighth of the religio-philosophical meetings, arguing that only if the State ceased to use the Church as a weapon would it become possible "to raise the question of freedom of conscience. Otherwise it will be only by virtue of indifferentism that the State can give freedom to the sects along with the Church". But "Russian State power cannot be indifferent or atheist if it does not want to renounce itself". In other words: if the State was truly the defender of Orthodoxy, as it claimed, it should free the Church from political tasks and bondage that were alien to her nature. Otherwise, freedom would simply help the sectarians and atheists to fight against the Church, while she remained unable to defend herself freely. Thus the questions of Church reform and freedom of conscience were inescapably linked…

It was not only liberals like Sergius who favoured Church reform. The former revolutionary-turned-monarchist L.A. Tikhomirov published an article arguing that the State should "give the Church independence and the possibility of being the kind of organization she must be in accordance with *her own* laws, while remaining in union with her". The problem was that both conservatives and liberals could argue for Church reform, but for completely different motives. Tikhomirov wrote as one who had seen the revolution from within, and turned away from it with all his heart, acknowledging the only true defence against it to be the strengthening of Church consciousness among the people. The liberals, on the other hand, were motivated, not by a desire to see the Church free and therefore able to exert a more powerful influence on society, but rather the opposite: a desire to humble the State and destroy the Church's influence once and for all. As for the liberal *bishops* such as Sergius, they leapt onto the band-wagon of the reform of Church-State relations, and of what later came to be called *renovationism*, in order to further their own careers…

Another liberal-renovationist cause that Bishop Sergius espoused during the religio-philosophical meetings was that of the novelist Leo Tolstoy. As we have seen, Tolstoy was in essence a radical Protestant, who stood for a Christianity reduced to "pure" morality without the Church, dogmas, miracles or sacraments. His teaching became very popular both at home and abroad (especially in England), both among the educated and the peasants. Soon his followers, although not organized into any "Church", were rivalling other sects such as the Baptists, the Stundists, the Molokans and the Dukhobors in numbers and influence.

L. Solonevich points out that for centuries the Russian Empire had lived out of necessity in the conditions of a military camp. Such conditions required obedience and discipline, but "this obedience and this discipline were not particularly sweet. In the last one hundred years Russia has experienced, so to

speak, a permanent revolution. A permanent rebellion against the authorities and against discipline. This rebellion took the most various forms – from Pugachevschina to Tolstoyism. And if we take our greatest writer as an example, we can now, after our 'great and bloodless' [revolution of 1917], value his deeds more or less in accordance with their merits. The Tolstoyan rebellion did very much both for the undermining of the Russian monarchy ('I cannot keep silent') and for the undermining of Russian Orthodoxy ('The Gospel of Tolstoy') and for the undermining of the Russian family ('The Kreutzer Sonata'), and even for the undermining of the Russian courts, which in *Resurrection* are portrayed as a talentless and feelingless machine – while the Russian courts were the most merciful and conscientious in the world."

Indeed, it was the publishing of *Resurrection* in 1899 that was the last straw for the Church. The novel, which sold more copies than any of his earlier works, portrayed a society so rotten and oppressive that revolution was inevitable. It also subjected the teaching and sacraments of the Orthodox Church to ridicule. If the government felt that it could not censor Tolstoy and thereby make a political martyr out of him, the Church, spurred on by Pobedonostsev, felt otherwise…

On February 24, 1901 the Holy Synod anathematised him, declaring: "Well known to the world as a writer, Russian by birth, Orthodox by baptism and education, Count Lev Nikolayevich Tolstoy, seduced by intellectual pride, has arrogantly risen against the Lord and His Christ and His Holy heritage, and has plainly in the sight of all repudiated his Orthodox Mother Church which reared and educated him and has dedicated his literary activity and the talent given to him by God to disseminating among the people teachings opposed to Christand the Church, and to destroying in the minds and hearts of people their national faith, that Orthodox faith which has been confirmed by the Universe and in which our forefathers lived and were saved, and to which Holy Russia until now has clung and in which it has been strong...

"In his writings Count Lev Tolstoy has blasphemed against the holy sacraments, denying their grace-filled character, has not venerated the Orthodox Church as his Church, has spoken evil of the clergy, has said that he considers that to venerate Christ and worship Him as God is blasphemy, while saying of himself, by contrast: 'I am in God, and God in me'. It is not the Church that has rejected him, casting him off from herself, but he himself has rejected the Church: Lev himself has of his own will fallen away from the Church and is no longer a son of the Church, but is hostile to her. All attempts of the clergy to admonish the prodigal have failed to produce the desired fruits: in his pride he has considered himself cleverer than all, less fallible than all and the judge of all, and the Church has made a declaration about the falling away of Count Lev Tolstoy from the Russian Orthodox Church."

Tolstoy was opposed especially by the extraordinary priest St. John of Kronstadt, who demonstrated by his wonderful life abounding in good works and extraordinary miracles, that Christianity "does not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God" (I Corinthians 2.5). He wrote of Tolstoy that he had "made himself into a complete savage with regards to the faith and the Church." He called him not only a heretic, but also an antichrist, and refused to receive honorary membership of Yuriev university if Tolstoy was to receive the same honour. St. John lamented that "the Church of God on earth, the beloved bride, is impoverished, she suffers from the savage attacks on her from the atheist Leo Tolstoy…"

For Tolstoy, wrote St. John, "there is no supreme spiritual perfection in the sense of the achievements of Christian virtues – simplicity, humility, purity of heart, chastity, repentance, faith, hope, love in the Christian sense; he does not recognize Christian endeavours; he laughs at holiness and sacred things – it is himself he adores, and he bows down before himself, like an idol, like a superman; I, and no one else but me, muses Tolstoy. You are all wrong; I have revealed the truth and am teaching everyone the truth! The Gospel according to Tolstoy is an invention and a fairy tale. So, Orthodox people, who is Lev Tolstoy? He is a lion roaring [*Lev rykayushchy*], looking for someone to devour [I Peter 5.8]. And how many he has devoured with his flattering pages! Watch out for him."

St. John was a fervent monarchist. "With all our heart," he said, "we shall thank God that He gave and up to the present day still gives us autocratic and monarchical tsars in accordance with His heart, preserving the succession of the Romanov dynasty and the spirit of Orthodox in them, for the magnification of the Faith and the Church of the Orthodoxy and of the Russian state. Our Tsar [Nicholas II] is a righteous man of pious life. God has sent him a heavy cross of sufferings as to His chosen one and beloved child. Remember: if there will be no monarchy, there will be no Russia. Only the monarchical order gives stability to Russia; under a constitution it will all split up into pieces."

And he foretold cruel overseers and terrible sufferings for the people if the autocracy were to be overthrown…

St. John was opposed not only to Tolstoy, but also to the whole "proto-renovationist" current in the Church led by Bishop Sergius. "These people," he wrote, "are rejecting the Church, the sacraments, the authority of the clergy and they have even thought up a journal *The New Way* [which published published reports on the religio-philosophical meetings in St. Petersburg]. This journal has undertaken to search for God, as if the Lord had not

appeared to people and had not revealed the true way. They will find no other way than in Christ Jesus, our Lord. […] It is Satan who reveals all of these new ways and stupid people who don't understand what they are doing and are driving themselves and their nation to ruin by spreading their satanic ideas among the nation."

St. John especially bemoaned Tolstoy's influence on youth: "Our *intelligenty* youths have subverted the social and educational order, they have taken politics and the law-courts upon themselves without being called to do so by anyone; they have taken to judging their masters, their teachers, the government and all but kings themselves; together with their head, Leo Tolstoy, they have judged and condemned the universal and fearful Judge Himself… Verily, the day of the dread Judgement is near, for the deviation from God which was foretold has already occurred and the forerunner of the antichrist has already revealed himself, the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped."

Fr. John was supported by the better clergy, such as the future metropolitan and hieromartyr (and opponent of Sergius) Fr. Joseph (Petrovykh), who wrote: "Lack of faith, impiety and all kinds of harmful tendencies are now pouring over Holy Rus' in a still more swollen river. They were restrained by this powerful personality [Fr. John], who was put forward by the Providence of God to oppose the heretic Tolstoy." Fr. John had great influence with the royal family, and the tsar visited him secretly. This influence was noted and feared by a new player in church and court circles – the false elder Gregory Rasputin. As Archbishop Theophan (Bystrov), at that time inspector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, witnessed: "Rasputin indicated with unusual skill that he had reservations [about Fr. John]… Rasputin… said of Fr. John of Kronstadt… that he was a saint but, like a child, lacked experience and judgement… As a result Fr. John's influence at court began to wane…"

Nevertheless, Fr. John continued to speak out boldly against the liberals, "those monsters of cruelty, those people whose aim is to live for themselves and for their own pleasure, not for the cause – those egotists, who do not empathize with their brethren… The mind works in them without the heart. Their hearts are not warmed by love for God and man, and they deny the existence of God, the foundations and bases of our common holy life, the rules of morality. Here is your education, students! This is because of your stupid education, Messrs. Pedagogues!"

35. THE RUSSIAN CHURCH AND "PROTO-ECUMENISM"

Throughout the Orthodox world in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries we see a tendency towards what we may call "proto-ecumenism". Thus in 1878 the Synod of Constantinople obliged Greek priests to carry out sacraments for Armenians where there were no Armenian priests or churches in the vicinity. Similarly, in 1847 a concordat was signed between Emperor Nicholas I and Pope Gregory XVI according to which Orthodox priests would be allowed to give sacraments to Catholics exiled to Russia for participating in the Polish rebellions against the Tsar if there were no Catholic churches or priests in the vicinity. In accordance with this concordat, the Russian Synod ordered all Orthodox clergy to satisfy the requests of exiled Catholics in this connection. Again, during the First World War the famous Serbian theologian Fr. Nikolai Velimirovich, who studied for several postgraduate degrees in western universities, served with Anglicans in London after the outbreak of war in 1914. In 1847 a concordat was signed between Emperor Nicholas I and Pope Gregory XVI according to which Orthodox priests would be allowed to give sacraments to Catholics exiled to Russia for participating in the Polish rebellions against the Tsar if there were no Catholic churches or priests in the vicinity. In accordance with this concordat, the Russian Synod ordered all Orthodox clergy to satisfy the requests of exiled Catholics in this connection.

In 1900, Bishop Tikhon of Alaska, the future Martyr-Patriarch, attended the consecration of Reginald Weller as Episcopalian Bishop Coadjutor of the Diocese of Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. In his diary under December 16/29, 1900, Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin) of Japan mentions this fact with some annoyance: "Why did Tikhon worm himself in there in a hierarchical mantia?"

As the Russian empire had expanded over the centuries, so had the number of subjects of other, non-Orthodox faiths, to the extent that by the late imperial period, as Igor Smolich says, it was no longer a "confessionally united kingdom", but an "inter-confessional empire". Thus, as Archimandrite Macarius (Veretennikov) writes, commenting on Smolich's work, "Tsar Alexander III, for example, visited Buddhist temples and attended their services; [and] Tsar Nicholas II also (for example, during the world war) visited Catholic churches, Jewish synagogues and Muslim mosques, attended their services, and kissed the Catholic cross. From a purely ecclesiastical-formal point of view the Orthodox tsar should not have done that, but as the head of a super-confessional empire, as emperor, he was forced to it."

Although for the time being the Lord "winked" at these violations of Orthodox canon law, the time was coming, after the fall of the empire, when

He would no longer be so indulgent…

The official service-books of the Russian Church reveal an ambiguous attitude towards the sacraments of the heretics and schismatics. Thus in the *Trebnik,* or *Book of Needs*, we read: "Know this also, that a schismatic baptism, and a heretical one, by those who believe in the Holy Indivisible Trinity, in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, the Holy Orthodox-Catholic Church determines to be ultimately acceptable in every way." What did this mean? That the schismatic baptism was valid, or that it was "acceptable" in the sense that it did not have to be repeated? It is not clear…

Again, Bulgakov's *Nastol'naia Kniga*, or *Handbook for Clergy*, explains that Roman Catholics, if they have been baptised and confirmed, should be received by the "Third Rite", that is, renunciation of heresies and repentance. If they have not been confirmed, they must be chrismated. They must *never* be baptised. "Recognising Baptism as a requirement for becoming a member of her, [the Russian Orthodox Church] accepts Jews, Muslims, pagans and those sectarians who distort the fundamental dogmas of the Orthodox Church through Baptism; Protestants are accepted through Chrismation; and those Catholics, Armenians and members of the Anglican Church who have not received Chrismation or Confirmation, and also those who have fallen away from Orthodoxy, she accepts through the Third Rite, through Repentance, repudiation of errors and Communion of the Holy Mysteries."

The 1903 Epistle of the Holy Synod of the Russian Church to the Patriarch of Constantinople expressed firm opposition to union with the heretics. The hierarchs were "unchangeably convinced… that our Eastern Orthodox Church, which has inviolably preserved the complete deposit of Christ, is alone at the present time the Oecumenical Church". "As regards our relations with the two great ramifications of Christianity, the Latins and the Protestants, the Russian Church, together with all the autocephalous Churches, ever prays, awaits, and fervently desires that those who in times of old were children of Mother Church and sheep of the one flock of Christ, but who now have been torn away by the envy of the foe and are wandering astray, 'should repent and come to the knowledge of the truth', that they should once more return to the bosom of the Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church, to their one Shepherd. We believe in the sincerity of their faith in the All-Holy and Life-Originating Trinity, and on that account we accept the baptism of both the one and the other. We respect the Apostolic Succession of the Latin hierarchy, and those of their clergy who join our Church we accept in the Orders which they then possess, just as we do in the case of Armenians, Copts, Nestorians and other bodies that have not lost Apostolic Succession. 'Our heart is enlarged' (II Corinthians 6.11), and we are ready to do all that is possible in order to promote the establishment upon earth of the unity which

we so much desire. But, to our great regret and to the common grief of all true children of the Church, at the present time we are obliged to think, not so much of softening our relations towards Western Christians, and of a love-abounding drawing of their communities into union with us, as of the unwearying and ever-watchful defence of the rational sheep committed to our charge from unceasing attacks and multiform seducements on the part of the Latins and the Protestants."

As Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) explained, the refusal to rebaptise or reordain a heretic, and reception of him by the "Third Rite", did not entail the belief that the heretic was inside the Church. It was rather an acceptance that the *form* of these rites was correct and did not have to be repeated; so that this form became as it were a cup receiving the grace that is imparted only in the Orthodox Church. Unfortunately, however, this widespread practice of "economy" in the reception of heretics led to frequent misunderstandings in the ecumenical era that began after the First World War…

36. THE NATIONALITIES POLICY

Among the many kinds of freedom idolized in the late nineteenth century, by no means the least important was the freedom of the nation; and in a multi-national empire such as Russia the spread of nationalism could not fail to be a major concern of the authorities. Alexander III's answer, which was followed by his son, Nicholas II, was to introduce the policy known to historians as "Russification", a well-meaning attempt to unite the empire around the language and culture of the dominant imperial nation. Let us see how that was applied in the different regions.

1. Poland and the West. Perhaps the clearest failure of Russian nationalities policy, besides the Jews, was Poland. Alexander I's grant to the Poles of a very liberal constitution, more liberal than anything on offer in Russia itself, was brought to an end by the revolution of 1831. The second revolution of 1863 necessitated a harsher reaction; Russification was part of that reaction. Thus Hosking writes: "Most Polish officials were replaced by Russian ones, and the Russian language was imposed for official business. The University of Warsaw was converted into a wholly Russian institution, whilst it was stipulated that Polish schools, even at primary level, should teach all subjects in Russia, save the Polish language itself. In practice, the government had no means to impose these provisions, and Polish-language schooling continued, albeit clandestinely.

"Poland did derive economic benefits from being included within the empire's tariff enclosure: it was able to sell its industrial products in a huge market that needed them. With some 8% of the population, Poland produced about a quarter of the empire's industrial output, notably in textiles, metallurgy and machine tools…"

In spite of these benefits, the Poles remained unremittingly hostile to Russia. "In 1905-6 Poland was perhaps the most violent part of the empire. Immediately after Bloody Sunday, in January 1905, workers in the textile centre of Lodz went on strike and demonstrated with placards proclaiming 'Down with the autocracy! Down with the war!' They also had economic demands: an eight-hour day and huge wage rises. The police intervened, and in the resultant fighting perhaps one hundred people were killed. That scene was repeated several times during 1905. At times Poland was in a state of virtual civil war, in which students, schoolchildren and often criminal bands were involved as well as workers. Only the peasants remained relatively quiescent: they had neither the grievances nor the communal solidarity of those in Russia.

"Altogether the armed struggle in Poland during 1905-6 lasted longer than

the guerilla war of 1863-4 and claimed more lives. It was also a grave strain on the Russian armed forces: at the height of the troubles some 300,000 men were stationed there, as compared with 1,000,000 on the Japanese front. No clearer example could be imagined of the high cost of trying to Russify a people with a well-developed national identity and sense of culture, religion and citizenship quite different from that of Russia."

True; and yet Russia's failure in Poland cannot be blamed entirely on the policy of russification. The root problem was the implacable opposition of Polish Catholicism to Russian Orthodoxy. As long as the combination of Catholicism and fervent nationalism prevailed, there was no hope, not only of assimilation, but even of peaceful relations between the two peoples. Catherine II's conquest of Poland, while it had certain geopolitical advantages, proved in the long run to have created the Achilles heel of the Russian empire, in that it included into the empire two peoples – the Poles and the Jews – whose opposition to Russia remained implacable to the end.

2. Ukraine and Belorussia. If Poland was to Russia what Ireland was to England, then Ukraine and Belorussia were to Russia what Scotland and Wales were to England. In the latter comparison, a common faith – Orthodoxy in the case of Russia, Ukraine and Belorussia, Protestantism in the case of England, Scotland and Wales - made coexistence easier. Even so, in an age of increasing nationalism there were bound to be centripetal pressures; and, to use a useful distinction between "civilization" and "culture", even where there was considerable identity of *civilization* – in the sense of "ideas and traditions… inherited from the ancient world and from Christianity", it was the *cultural* difference – that is, idiosyncracies of speech, folklore, dress and everyday life - that tended to be emphasized. But underlining cultural differences could lead to a betrayal of the deeper civilizational traditions of the nation seeking to distinguish itself.

The Russians, by contrast, emphasised their civilizational unity with the Ukrainians and Belorussians. All three nations confessed Orthodox Christianity, and Kiev was "the mother of all *Russian* cities", the capital of a pan-Russian State which in the eleventh century had covered the territories of all three peoples. Moreover (although here the commonality was cultural rather than civilizational), all three peoples were Eastern Slavic, and their languages could be said to be different dialects of a single original language. So, as the Russians argued, they were all really *one* nation…

The Russians refused to accept the existence either of a distinct Ukrainian language: "there never has been a distinct Little Russian language, and there never will be one", declared Minister of the Interior P.A. Valuev. The Ukrainians were called "Little Russians" by contrast with the "Great

Russians" to the north. As Lieven writes, tsarist statesmen "focused their attention on the linguistic and cultural foundations of national identity and therefore of subsequent political nationalism. In 1863 General Annenkov, the governor-general of the Kiev region, flatly opposed the publication of the bible in Ukrainian, commenting that by its publication Ukrainian nationalists 'would achieve so to speak the recognition of the independence of the Little Russian language, and then of course they will make claims to autonomy for Little Russia.' Thirteen years later a key government memorandum warned of the dangers of 'various doctrines which superficially contain nothing political and seem to relate only to the sphere of purely academic and artistic interests'. In the long run their danger could be very great. 'Nothing divides people as much as differences in speech and writing. Permitting the creation of a special literature for the common people in the Ukrainian dialect would signify collaborating in the alienation of Ukraine from the rest of Russia.' The memorandum went on to emphasize the very great importance of the Ukrainians to the Russian nation and state: 'To permit the separation… of thirteen million Little Russians would be the utmost political carelessness, especially in view of the unifying movement which is going on alongside us among the German tribe.' In the light of such views the tsarist regime did its utmost from 1876 to stop the development of a written Ukrainian language or high culture. Virtually all publication in Ukrainian was banned until the period 1905-14, when revolution, the semi-constitution of 1906 and the partial liberalization of politics allowed the language greater leeway. Even in the so-called Constitutional Era, however, not only the government but also the imperial parliament refused to contemplate any teaching of or in Ukrainian in schools, once again taking a much tougher line over Ukrainian than other languages."

And yet here was the rub: that the ruling civilization (and culture) of most of Russia's ruling elites was no longer the Orthodox Christianity that had united all the Eastern Slavic peoples in the past: it was the civilization of contemporary Western Europe. So "Russification" in practice often meant Westernization with a Russian tinge and in the Russian language.

A better policy, surely, would have been for the government to emphasise the "*civilizational*", - that is, in essence, *religious* - unity between the three peoples without trying to deny their *cultural* – especially linguistic - differences. For among the peasants, if not for the intelligentsia, civilizational, religious unity was still strong – and stronger than any nationalist passion. As Figes writes, "in Belorussia and the northern Ukraine there was so much ethnic and religious intermingly – in an area the size of Cambridgeshire there might be a mixture of Belorussian, Ukrainian, Russian, Polish, Jewish and Lithuanian settlements – that it was difficult for anything more than a localized form of ethnic identity to take root in the popular consciousness.

One British diplomat… concluded that this was still the case as late as 1918: 'Were one to ask the average peasant in the Ukraine his nationality he would answer that he is Greek Orthodox; if pressed to say whether he is a Great Russian, a Pole, or an Ukrainian, he would probably reply that he is a peasant; and if one insisted on knowing what language he spoke, he would say that he talked 'the local tongue'…'"

3. Finland. Lieven writes: "Conquered in 1809, the Grand Duchy of Finland enjoyed a high degree of autonomy throughout the nineteenth century. In Russian terms its status was anomalous, not only because it was uniquely free of Petersburg's control but also because it possessed representative institutions and a secure rule of law. In the last two decades of the nineteenth century pressure increased from Petersburg to bring parts of Finnish law and administration into line with Russian norms. It stuck in Russian gullets, for instance, that Russians resident in Finland enjoyed fewer rights than ethnic Finns, something that was not true of Finns living in Russia. With Russo-German antagonism growing and Sweden a very possible ally of Germany in any future war, the extent to which Helsinki was almost completely free from Petersburg's supervision also caused worry. So long as Finland was governed by Count N.V. Adlerberg (1866-81) and then Count F.L. Heiden (1881-98) the very sensible rule prevailed that infringements on Finnish autonomy must be kept to the strictly necessary minimum. When General N.I. Bobrikov was appointed Governor-General in 1898, however, not only did he arrive with sweeping plans to increase Petersburg's control, he also implemented this policy with a tactless, ham-fisted brutality which turned Finland into a hotbed of opposition.

"Real trouble with Finland began when Petersburg imposed its own military conscription system on the Finns and sought to unify the Russian and Finnish armies. Though this scheme had been in the making for a number of years, it was pushed hard by the new Minister of War, Aleksei Kuropatkin, who was appointed in 1898. The majority of Russian senior officials opposed Kuropatkin's conscription law in the belief that it would needlessly antagonize the Finns and it was actually voted down in the State Council, the body of senior statesmen who advised the Tsar on legislation. As was his right, however, Nicholas overrode the council and Kuropatkin's conscription law went into effect. In the Emperor's defence it could be argued that had he failed to back up his new Minister of War the latter's authority would have been fatally damaged. Moreover, the government's case vis-á-vis Finland was not entirely unjustified, its fears for the security of Petersburg, very close to the Finnish border, causing it particular alarm. In terms of political wisdom and tact, however, Kuropatkin's law, not to mention Bobrikov's antics, were a disaster. The government, which had hoped to play off the ethnic Finnish majority against the country's Swedish elite, quickly united the whole country

against itself. Among those who protested to Nicholas about Bobrikov's policy was his mother, herself a Scandinavian princess. In what was, coming from her, an extremely angry letter, she accused her son of going back on his promise to her that Bobrikov would be reined in and commented that 'all that has been and is being done in Finland is based on lies and deceit and leads straight to revolution'. Apart from asserting that the Finns would come round if the government showed itself resolute, Nicholas's reply to his mother skated around the main issue at stake. Seen from the Russian perspective this issue was, in Kireev's words, that 'thanks to Bobrikov and his system we have created a new Poland at the gates of Saint Petersburg! And it would have been easy to avoid this.'

"In its approach to the Finnish question Petersburg made mistakes which were typical of the Russian government at this time. Policy towards Finland was decided on its own, not in the wider context of an overall strategy for achieving the government's aims and avoiding danger across the whole range of the empire's affairs. It made no sense to challenge Finnish nationalism at a time when the regime already had its hands full with a host of other domestic enemies. Nor did the government clearly define its essential interests in Finland in the light of its overall commitments, and then devote the necessary means to achieve these limited goals. By the time Governor-General Bobrikov was assassinated in June 1904 Finland was moving towards open insurrection. By then, however, much of urban Russia was moving in the same direction…"

4. The Baltic. "The Baltic region," writes Hosking, "resembled Finland in so far as the Russian authorities supported, up to a point, the claims of the subordinate nationalities, the Estonians and Latvians, against the dominant Germans. But they pursued this policy with much greater caution than in Finland, since the Baltic Germans were far more important to them than the Swedes. Indeed, it could be argued that, of all ethnic groups in the whole empire, the Baltic Germans were the most loyal. However, their loyalty was to the Tsar personally, and to the empire as a multi-national entity, not to Russia as a nation. As Alexander Graf Keyserling, former rector of Dorpat University, wrote in 1889, 'As long as the Emperor dominates the nation, we shall be able to survive and develop further.' It was not only the Russian nation he had in mind. The growth of German nationalism was equally ominous for the Baltic landowners, since it threatened to swamp the Ritterschaften (aristocratic corporations) with Germans from the towns and Estonians or Latvians from the countryside, both more numerous than themselves. In the long run they would all become the mere pawns of European great-power politics.

"The first Russian statesman to attack the German domination in the Baltic

was Iurii Samarin, who was sent to Riga as a senatorial inspector in 1849. He regarded the German urban guilds and the Ritterschaften as corrupt relics of an antiquated system which prevented the monarch from acting as the protector of ordinary people and obstructed Russians from exercising their legitimate authority in the Russian Empire. 'We Russians claim the right to be in Russia what the French are in France and the English throughout the British dominions.' At this stage, before the drive to national homogenization had gripped the authorities, such views were unwelcome to the Tsar: Nicholas ordered that Samarin be detained in the Peter-Paul Fortress for twelve days and personally rebuked him. 'Your attack is aimed at the government: what you really meant was that since the reign of the Emperor Peter we have been surrounded by Germans and have ourselves become Germanised.'

"By the 1870s, however, different views prevailed in St. Petersburg. Reform had come to Russia, rendering Tsars more reluctant to acknowledge intermediate authorities between themselves and their subjects. Besides, the unification of Germany naturally reinforced the ethnic identification of Baltic Germans, especially those in the towns. Ivan Aksakov had warned of this danger in 1862, when he complained that the Baltic Germans, 'though devoted to the Russian throne, preach war to the death against the Russian nationality; faithful servants of the Russian state, they care not a fig for the Russian Land'. Alexander III took a symbolically important decision when, on his accession to the throne in 1881, he declined to confirm the privileges of the Ritterschaften, as all his successors had done since Peter the Great.

"Administrative integration began with the introduction of the new municipal institutions in the Baltic in 1877, but the authorities shrank from undermining the Ritterschaftern in the countryside by introducing Russian-style zemstvos there. To that extent, the old policy of accommodating local elites continued: the Ritterschaften remained as the ultimate repositories of local authority right through to 1917, though their practical power was gradually being chipped away both by social change and by governmental measures. In the 1880s they lost judicial powers with the introduction of the new Russian courts, along with the use of Russian in all administrative and judicial procedures. Their supervision of schools was weakened by the opening of numerous 'ministerial schools' run from St. Petersburg and offering intuition in Russian only: it was here that many Estonians and Latvians received their basic education and began to move into professional and administrative positions, becoming what St. Petersburg hoped would be the agents of future Russian domination. At the same time an attempt was made to make Russian compulsory in all but the lowest forms of primary schools. In 1893 Dorpat University was closed and reopened as Iur'ev University, a Russian institution: professors and lecturers (with the revealing

exception of theology) who were not prepared to teach in Russian had to resign.

"In religious matters there was a return to the policy of forbidding Estonians and Latvians who had converted – usually under threat - to Orthodoxy to return to the Lutheran faith. Those who had done so now found that their marriages were declared invalid, while pastors who had celebrated them were suspended investigation. Some 120 suffered this fate before the policy was abandoned in 1894…"

Here Hosking distorts the evidence. There was a genuine, unforced movement of Latvians towards Orthodoxy, of which the most famous product was the future hieromartyr Archbishop John (Pommer) of Riga, who was devoted to Russia and whose Orthodoxy was completely sincere. The Latvian peasants of his region had begun to show an interest in Orthodoxy in the middle of the nineteenth century, thanks to the preaching of the faith in their native language; and Hieromartyr John's great-grandfather had been one of the first to accept Orthodoxy in the region, for which he was subjected to persecution by the local German landowners. If there was persecution, it was much more likely to be by Lutherans against the Orthodox. Thus when St. John's great-grandfather died he was buried outside the bounds of the local Lutheran cemetery (there were no Orthodox cemeteries at that time) as the leader of the "rebels". The native peasants raised a mound over the place of his burial and put an eight-pointed star on top of it, but both the mound and the cross were removed by the Lutheran authorities.

Nevertheless, it must be admitted that the russification policy in the Baltic states, though less disastrous than in Finland, did not achieve its purpose. As Miranda Carter writes, "émigré German Balts had become… at the forefront of anti-Slavic Pan-Germanism".

5. The Caucasus. The Georgian State and Church are much older than the Russian – the Church was granted autocephaly in the fourth century at the Council of Antioch. The Bagration dynasty was founded in 886, and Georgia's golden age took place from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries. In the 1220 the Mongols invaded, and thereafter Georgian history consisted of a long succession of Muslim invasions in which the country was repeatedly devastated and many thousands martyred for the Orthodox faith.

Daniel Sargis writes: "In the late eighteenth century, King Irakly II of Georgia, an Orthodox Christian, was threatened by the Islamic rulers of Persia and Turkey. He turned to Russia, his Christian neighbour, for protection. In 1783, Empress Catherine the Great of Russia and King Irakly II signed the treaty of Georgievsk, in which Russia guaranteed the territorial integrity of

the Georgian kingdom in return for control of Georgia's foreign policy. The treaty also guaranteed the royal status of the Bagratid dynasty…: 'Henceforth Irakly II, as a believer in the same faith as Ours and as an ally of Russia, bears the title of King of Georgia, in which title and rights he and his issue are confirmed by Russia forever and for all time.'

"In 1795, the Persian shah, Aga Muhammad, demanded that King Irakly acknowledge Persian suzerainty over Georgia. King Irakly, declining to break his treaty with Russia, refused. The Persians then invaded. No Russian assistance was provided, but the old King, then more than 80 years old, managed to repulse the invaders three times before he was outnumbered and defeated. Finally, the Russians intervened and pushed out the Persians.

"In 1798, Irakly II died and was succeeded by his son, King George XII. Fearing the Persian threat, King George suggested to Empress Catherine's son and successor, Tsar Paul I, that he incorporate Georgia into the Russian Empire while allowing the Bagrations to continue to bear the title of King… At first, Emperor Paul agreed, but in the end he simply seized the country, putting an end to the long reign of the Bagrations."

The annexation of Georgia was proclaimed by Paul I on December 18, 1800, and was reaffirmed by his successor, Alexander I, on September 12, 1801. On the whole Georgia benefited from being part of the Russian empire – she would not have survived against the Muslims on her own. And Georgian saints, such as Elder Ilarion of Mount Athos, could be sincerely, even fiercely pro-Russian.

However, the price was high. "Within ten years," writes Lado Mirianashvili, "the Russian authorities had abolished the Georgian monarchy, the Church's autocephaly, and the patriarchal throne – all of which had withstood the Turks, the Mongols, and the Persians. During the subsequent 106 years, nineteen exarchs of the Russian Synod ruled the Georgian Church. Church services in Georgian were terminated, frescoes were whitewashed, and ancient Georgian icons and manuscripts were either sold or destroyed.

"The wanton destruction of the Iberian culture resulted in the emergence of the Georgian independence movement in the last half of the 19th century. Under the leadership of poet, historian, and philosopher St. Ilia Chavchavadze, members of the Georgian intelligentsia sought to preserve their language and culture, while promoting state independence and Church autocephaly. Both the Russian government and the Communist revolutionaries opposed this national movement, the latter because the movement proclaimed Georgia to be a Christian state. In 1907 the militant social democrats killed the 'father of modern Georgia', St. Ilia, in an attempt

to crush the national movement, whose Christian ideology undermined the Communist agenda."

Although Georgian nationalism was essentially Christian in nature, harking back nostalgically to the medieval Christian kingdom, according to Hosking it had "an anti-capitalist colouring, owing to the competition with the Armenians", who dominated banking and commerce in the towns. "They also considered that, as a small nation, their interests were best protected by internationalism, or more specifically, by membership of a democratic multi-national federation formed on the framework of the Russian Empire. Two of the leading Georgian radicals, Noa Zhordania and Filip Makharadze, studied in Warsaw, where they became convinced that Poles and Georgians, for all their differences, were conducting a common struggle against the autocratic empire, and must work together. Marxism fulfilled both the internationalist and the anti-capitalist requirements. The Georgians became perhaps the most sophisticated Marxists in the empire, taking over from the Austrian Marxists the notion of individual cultural autonomy as the best way of making possible inter-ethnic cooperation in a multi-national state. They also adapted their original agrarian programme so that it met the demands of peasants, and in that way were able to make themselves the leading political force in the countryside as well as the towns."

Meanwhile, in the third of the Transcaucasian territories, Azerbaidjan, "the emergence of a national consciousness was complicated by the domination of Islam, which tended towards supra-national forms and blocked the growth of a secular culture and a written language for the masses. To begin with, ironically, it was the Russians who encouraged the Azeris' secular culture to develop, promoting the plays of Akhundzada, the 'Tatar Molière', and commissioning histories of the Azeri folk culture and language, as a way of weakening the influence of the Muslim powers to the south."

6. Central Asia. "In Central Asia," writes Hosking, "the thrust of imperial policy was economic rather than assimilationist. Uniquely in the Russian empire, one may consider this region a genuine colony. Its status differed from that of other parts of the empire in several ways. Its inhabitants were known as *inorodtsy*, a category common enough in other contemporary empires, but not applied elsewhere in the Russian one: it implied an alien and inferior political status. The whole territory was not even fully incorporated into the empire: the Khanate of Khiva and the Emirate of Bukhara remained nominally sovereign, as protectorates bound to Russia by one-sided treaties which included them in the Russian customs union.

"In the regions incorporated into the empire, the Russian authorities did not interfere in religion, education, local administration or law courts. These

were Muslim and so far removed from Russian practice that any attempt to adapt them would have had scant chance of success and would have provoked intense resistance, which might have been exploited by the British to bolster their position in Central Asia. In this way a largely military supreme power in the region overlay a traditional and unchanged medium- and lower-level hierarchy."

However, in 1898 the Urmian spiritual mission of the Russian Orthodox Church was opened in Persia. By 1900 there had already been opened more than 60 schools serving 2300 students. On August 21, 1901 the future Hieromartyr, Fr. John Vostorgov was sent to Persia to oversee the work of the mission and began to labour for the conversion of the Syro-Chaldeans to Orthodoxy. For several years he waged a determined battle, the result of which was that three bishops - Mar Elijah, Mar John and Mar Marian - expressed their desire to be united to the Church. Thus was initiated the Syro-Chaldean Mission of the Russian Orthodox Church.

*

We may conclude that Russification was not a success in any of the regions of the Russian empire where it was applied, even in those, such as Ukraine and Belorussia, where religious, linguistic and cultural similarities were greatest. Nevertheless, it is an exaggeration to call this policy one of oppression and tyranny (we shall deal with the special case of the Jews later). And the epithet of "the prison of the peoples" given to Russia by her enemies was by no means just. In general, Russia coped remarkably well with the extraordinary diversity of peoples and traditions within her borders. Thus what subordinate people anywhere had more freedom than the Finns, the Muslims of Central Asia or the pagans of Siberia?

It is not clear that any other contemporary multinational empire succeeded any better in solving one the most intractable problems of politics: how to accommodate different peoples with different cultures and religions within a unitary state. The British had the problem of Ireland, the French – of Algeria; while the Austro-Hungarians had to contend with a whole series of discontented nationalities. "The Russian empire," writes Lieven, "included a wide range of peoples of very different cultures and levels of socio-economic development. Any attempt to impose a single, 'coherent' strategy on all of them would have been unthinkable and catastrophic. Moreover, it should by now be clear that there was no easy solution to the dilemmas of empire in the modern era. If tsarism floundered, so too did all its imperial rivals."

Lieven thinks that "in principle it might have been possible to strengthen empire by the appeal of the great civilization [understood here in a sense

inclusive of "culture"] to which the imperial regime was linked. Together with the economic and military advantages of empire, this might at least have provided some defence against the nationalist challenge… The century before 1914 had witnessed a tremendous flowering of Russian literary and musical culture. Not only had the Russian intelligentsia developed a very impressive high culture, but it was also open to people of varying races and religions, and had genuinely cosmopolitan sympathies and outlooks. Drawing inspiration from all the strands of European culture and speaking many languages, the Russian intelligentsia's culture was in some respects genuinely broader than the more national perspective common in the individual cultures of Western Europe. Though Polish and German subjects of the tsar were never likely to defer to Russian culture, the educated classes of Ukraine, Belorussia and the other smaller Christian peoples might well do so, especially if they were allowed to develop their own languages and cultures alongside Russian. Even the late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Muslim reformers, the so-called Jadids, often had considerable respect for the Russian intelligentsia's culture and were inclined to ally with it in order to modernize their own societies. Given the deep antagonism between the tsarist regime and much of the Russian intelligentsia, however, the pull of intelligentsia culture on the non-Russians was not much help to the empire's rulers. If, for example, Ukrainian or Jewish socialists were often drawn to all-imperial revolutionary parties rather than to more narrowly national ones, this was scarcely a gain from the tsar's point of view…"

Here we come to the hub of the matter: Russification was of little value if the Russia it propagated was not *Orthodoxy*, the root of Russian culture and the one thing that could truly unite the empire's peoples at a deep level. But the Russian government, while generously supporting Orthodox missions to pagan peoples, and in general supporting Orthodoxy everywhere, did not always see its nationalities policy in term of the spreading of Orthodoxy.

There were several reasons for this. First, the actual preaching of Orthodoxy is a task for the Church, not the State – and the Church was barely able to cope with the task of preaching the Gospel to the Russians themselves. (Thus St. John of Kronstadt had wanted to preach Christ to the Alaskan Indians, but decided to stay in Russia, where so many baptised people were still in need of conversion to True Christianity.) Secondly, the principles of religious tolerance and religious indifferentism had put down deep roots into the culture of the elites, who, if they had to preach or impose something, preferred that it would not be a dogmatic religion. And thirdly and most importantly, as Lieven points out, the dominant culture and religion of the Russian elites *was no longer Orthodoxy*, but West European liberalism, which led naturally to socialism, anti-tsarism and anti-Russianism.

And so if the Russian elites were going to draw the constituent peoples of the empire away from nationalism and towards universalism, it would be unlikely to be to the universalist civilization or "high culture" of Orthodox Christianity, the official religion of the empire, but to the quite different "high culture" of West European liberalism. What actually happened was a kind of bifurcation. Orthodoxy continued to be preached, with positive results, to the pagans and to the peasants, but the intelligentsia also continued to preach their gospel, the gospel of westernism, constitutionalism and ecumenism, with the most catastrophic results for the whole world…

Figes makes the important observation that it was not the liberals with their emphasis on individual human rights who exploited the nationalist unrest among the empires non-Russian peoples, but the socialists. "This socialistic aspect of the nationalist movements is worth underlining. For the late twentieth-century reader might be tempted to assume, on the basis of the collapse of Communism and the rise of nationalism in Eastern Europe, that they must have been opposed to socialist goals. What is striking about the nationalist movements within the Russian Empire is that their most successful political variants were nearly always socialist in form: Joseph Pilsudski's Polish Socialist Party led the national movement in Poland; the Socialist Party became the national party of the Finns; the Baltic movements were led by socialists; the Ukrainian Socialist Revolutionaries were the leading Ukrainian national party; the Mensheviks led the Georgian national movement; and the Dashnak socialists the Armenian one. This was in part because the main ethnic conflict also tended to run along social lines: Estonian and Latvian peasants against German landlords and merchants; Ukrainian peasants against Polish or Russian landlords and officials; Azeri workers, or Georgian peasants, against the Armenian bourgeoisie; Kazakh and Kirghiz pastoralists against Russian farmers; and so on. Parties which appealed exclusively to nationalism effectively deprived themselves of mass support; whereas those which successfully combined the national with the social struggle had an almost unstoppable democratic force…"

37. UNREST AMONG THE PEASANTS

Let us recall Kireev's words: "For the *time being* the peasants are still firm, still untouched. They are, as before, monarchists. But anyone can throw them into a muddle."

Not only could they be thrown into a muddle: they were vulnerable for the simple reason that in bad harvest years, *they starved*. This was not, as so many liberal and revolutionaries believed, the fault of the autocratic system, nor of the greed of the landowning nobility. By the turn of the century the great majority of the land was in the hands of the peasants and the nobility were heavily in debt and migrating to the cities… The real problem was the rapid growth of population, and the inadequacy of the central peasant institution of the *mir*, or commune.

Archpriest Lev Lebedev explains: "A special problem of the reign of his Majesty Nicholas II was, of course, the peasant or land question. By the beginning of the 20th century the peasants owned 160 million *desyatins* of land in Russia (moreover, it was the most fertile), while the landowners owned 52 million and about 30 million were owned by merchants, foreigners, stock companies and city unions. In the Central Black-Earth region more than half of the land was in the hands of the peasantry (in places up to 80%). State and appanage lands consisted mainly of woods and plots that were not suitable for cultivation. However, since the reforms of 1861 peasant landowning suffered from a noticeable inadequacy created artificially by the commune character of land-use. The notorious land field strip system (whereby a peasant received his allotment not in the form of an integral plot, but in the form of strips and bits scattered in various places), and also the periodic re-partitions, the redistribution of allotments by the village commune, made agriculture exceptionally difficult and deprived the peasant of all interest in his plot, which in fact did not belong to him and could be taken from him or substituted by another at any time. In essence, the power of the commune over the peasant took the place of the power of the landowner and often was even worse than it. In right-bank Ukraine, in Belorussia and in the Baltic region there were no communes, there the peasants were private owners of their allotments. But on the other hand these allotments were significantly smaller than in Great Russia… All this, together with other less significant inadequacies of village life led to the fact that during the times of poor harvests the peasantry suffered greatly and was not able to secure its existence without special subsidies."

This had been glaringly revealed, as we have seen, during the Volga famine of 1891; and for about a decade, the agrarian crisis remained in

suspense as a series of better harvests took some of the strain off the peasants. But at the beginning of the 1900s there were again some poor harvests…

"At the turn of the century," writes Dominic Lieven, "the government was less scared by working-class militancy than by growing evidence of peasant discontent. In June 1901 A.A. Polovtsov wrote: 'after the students' disorders there have followed strikes and factory workers' battles with the police. Next the peasant mass will rise up with a demand for land. Today's militia [the conscript army], torn away from this very land for a short period, will not use its weapons to curb these appetites, which it itself shares. This will be the end of the Russia which we know.' Nine months later, when a wave of arson and rioting swept the countryside in Poltava and Kharkov provinces, Polovtsov's prediction seemed amply justified. In the wake of these agrarian troubles the Secretary to the Committee of Ministers, Anatol Kulomzin, sought to reassure his wife. There had always, he wrote, been agrarian riots of this kind in Russia, during which peasants customarily paid back stewards and foremen for a multitude of old scores and minor injustices. Troops had refused to open fire on only one occasion, and even then out of simple dislike for he officer who gave the order. Alexander Kireev had less reason to hide his fears since his comments were confined to his private diary. 'I think we can cope with the students and co. without difficulty, but millions of peasants… that's a completely different matter.'

"Witte's response was to claim, correctly, that 'the picture of the peasants' miserable condition is greatly exaggerated', particularly by opponents of the government's economic policy who sought to hide their selfish interests or ideological preferences behind claims that the Ministry of Finance was ruining the peasantry. Throughout the 1890s Witte opposed direct subsidies or cheap credit to agriculture as a waste of scarce resources. In his view investment in industry was more useful even for the rural population because jobs in the cities would reduce land hunger in the villages and, above all, provide agriculture with markets for its produce and therefore with the incentive to modernize. Witte doubted whether big capital investments in noble estates could ever be justified given the low costs of production in the Americas and Australasia, whose agricultural produce was now flooding the world market. Though more sympathetic as regards cheap credit for peasant farms, he argued that the structure of peasant landowning made large-scale lending to the peasantry very dangerous. By law most peasant farms belonged not to individuals or even families but to the whole village community. Nor could this land be sold or mortgaged. As a result there was no way to secure loans or recover debts from the peasantry, as the latter knew only too well.

"By the early twentieth century, however, it was no longer possible for

Witte to shrug off attacks on his indifference to peasant needs. Political pressure to 'do something about agriculture' was building up, as was fear of peasant discontent. After a tour of the provinces at the turn of the century even the rather dim Dmitri Sipyagin, the Minister of Internal Affairs, commented that 'we are standing on a volcano'. In addition, the state's finances were in increasing disarray, and the need to increase its revenues pressing.

"Nicholas II was kept well informed about the problem of both the peasantry and the treasury… As Serge Witte pointed out to Nicholas in January 1902, if the escalation of defence costs could not be halted, it was hard to see how the peasants' tax burden could be greatly reduced or large sums provided for the modernization of village life and peasant agriculture. The conclusion drawn by Witte was that improvement of the peasants' lot would have to come less from the largesse of the treasury than from changes in the system of peasant landholding. The farmer, he told Nicholas, must have individual rights and freedom, including unrestricted property rights to his land. In other words, Witte was calling for the abolition of the peasant commune, the cornerstone of Russia's rural economy and society.

"Ever since the abolition of serfdom in 1861, indeed to some extent even before that, the commune had been the most important institution in Russian rural life. The peasant community, which was usually but not always made up of inhabitants of a single village, administered and judged by its own members through officials elected by itself. It also bore collective responsibility for paying the state's taxes. Although in principle the administrative, judicial and fiscal institutions of the village were distinct from the community's collective ownership of the land, in practice the power of the commune was enormously enhanced by the fact that it controlled, and in many cases periodically redistributed, the villagers' basic source of wealth.

"Defenders of the commune believed it was a form of social welfare, which would ensure that no peasant would go without the means of survival. They felt that at least until the capitalist economy had developed to the point where millions of secure jobs existed in the cities, the only way to avoid pauperization was to ensure that any peasant, even if he was temporarily resident in a town, would have a plot of land on which to fall back. Because the masses would not be destitute and would have rights to the use of property, it was believed that they would be more immune to radical and socialist propaganda than urban workers and landless agricultural labourers in the West. Not even the most ardent defenders of the commune would probably have argued that, from the narrow perspective of agricultural modernization, it was the best form of landownership; they did deny, and probably rightly, that it was as serious an obstacle to technical improvement

as its enemies suggested. The fact that the commune was seen to be an old Russian institution which would preserve the country from the perils that had attended modernization in the West also added to its appeal. Anatol Kulomzin, for instance, was very much on the liberal and Westernizing wing of the ruling elite. He wrote, however, that even he swallowed whole the Russian nationalist view of the commune, so flattering to patriotic pride, and 'only the troubles of 1905-6 which pointed to the socialist spirit which the commune had bred in the life of the peasantry finally sobered me.'"

Here was the central paradox of the peasant question: that its basic institution, the commune, both protected from socialism of the western, Marxist type, and fostered socialism of the eastern, "Asiatic" type. The latter we may also call "peasant socialism", since it is found to a greater or lesser extent in many peasant societies. Some degree of communal ownership of land is a characteristic of almost all pre-industrial societies, and the transition from a mainly agricultural to a mainly industrial economy is almost always accompanied by the taking over of communal lands into private ownership.

Now the commune and "peasant socialism" was doomed in Russia from the moment that Alexander II decided, after the defeat in the Crimean War, to enter upon the path of industrialization. For industrialization required industrial workers to live near industrial centres, which meant that peasants had to be free to sell up and move – in other words, they had to be free citizens in relation to their noble owners, and free landholders in relation to their communes. The problem was that, while emancipation had made them citizens and freed them from the bonds of the landowner, it had not made them truly independent of the commune and therefore truly independent landholders.

In fact, since emancipation had made many nobles poorer and indebted, forcing them, too, - seven out of ten of them - to move to the cities, the communes had become even stronger, moving into the cultural void left by the nobility and controlling more land that used to belong to the nobility. (This was in contrast to, for example, Britain, where the landowning nobility remained powerful in the countryside long into the industrial age.) As we have seen, the peasants owned most of the land, and more than three quarters of the most fertile land. But these were not independent peasants: they were members of the communes. "The commune lorded it throughout central, northern, eastern and southern Russia and in the northern Caucasus, while it was only in the western region (mainly in the provinces that belonged to Poland until the end of the 18th century) that peasant private property prevailed on the land." So, though doomed in the longer term, and much less productive (most of Russia's grain exports came from private land), the peasant socialism of the communes became for a time still more powerful…

In 1902 the Tsar decided to conduct a nation-wide inquiry into the needs of the countryside. 600 committees were set up around the country; their work was described in 58 printed volumes. Most of the committees came to the conclusion that the root of the problem lay in the communes, and that individual peasants should be given the freedom to leave them…

This created a problem for the government, however. For the opinion both on the right and the left among the educated classes, and even among the tsars since at least the time of Alexander III, had been that the commune was one of the main pillars of Russian life, and should by all means be supported. It would be difficult to undertake radical reform straightaway…

Nor did it help that Tolstoy decided to choose this time to write to the Tsar: "The autocracy is an outdated form of government… The hundred-million-strong people will tell you that it wants freedom to use the land, that is the annihilation of the right of ownership of the land. I think that its annihilation will place the Russian people on a high level of independence, prosperity and contentment." We know what its annihilation did in the 1930s…

Unfortunately, Tolstoy's call to annihilate the property of the landlords was taken up by professional revolutionaries. For, as Lebedev writes, "in the provinces where there was famine there appeared revolutionary agitators who called on the peasants to rob the landowners' agriculture, mills and store-houses and gave them revolutionary literature. They were often successful. Thus in 1902 a wave of peasant disorders with robberies rolled through Kharkov and Poltava provinces. In some cases the army had to be called out. Several people were killed. In the government and the *zemstva* work of various kinds was done to clarify the needs of village agriculture and the means of its amelioration. His Majesty took the whole land-peasant question very closely to heart. On August 29, 1902 he visited Kursk, where he met deputies of the peasants and nobility. Addressing the Kursk peasants, Nicholas II qualified the Poltava-Kharkov disturbances as inadmissible and said the notable words: '*Remember that people get rich, not from seizing other people's goods, but from honest labour, thrift and life in accordance with the commandments of God.*' He could have said this (and often said it, directly or indirectly!) to the whole of Russian society and the whole world! In essence this was a short expression of the main idea of the whole of his internal and external politics. But the Tsar understood that the idea had to ensured by concrete measures. To the same people of Kursk he promised: 'I will not forget your real needs.' And he did not forget them. From the beginning of 1903 his Majesty set about a consistent new 'emancipation' and liberation of the peasants with an amelioration of their material and cultural situation. In his manifesto of February 26, 1903, while still keeping the *mir*, measures were

announced to *ease the exit from it* of individual peasants, and the system of bail [the law whereby the debts of peasants who failed to pay their taxes had to be paid by the other members of their commune] was rescinded. Also, privileged conditions were created for the resettlement of those who wanted suitable lands in Siberia. Thus was prefigured the new great reform of agriculture."

The roots of the peasant disturbances lay in their very individual understanding of property rights, which we touched on in an earlier chapter. Pipes writes: "The *muzhik* had no notion of property rights in the Roman sense of absolute dominion over things. According to one authority, Russian peasants did not even have a word for landed property (*zemel'naia sobstvennost'*): they only spoke of possession (*vladenie*), which in their mind was indissolubly bound up with physical labor. Indeed, the *muzhik* was not even able clearly to distinguish the land to which he held legal title by virtue of purchase from his communal allotment and from the land which he leased, all of which he called 'our land': 'The expression "our land" in the mouth of the peasant includes indiscriminately the whole land he occupies for the time being, the land which is his private property… the land held in common by the village (which is therefore only in temporary possession of each household), and also the land rented by the village from neighbouring landlords.' The *muzhik*'s whole attitude toward landed property derived from a collective memory of centuries of nomadic agriculture, when land was as abundant as water in the sea and available to all. The 'slash-and-burn' method of cultivating virgin forest had gone out of use in most of Russia in the late Middle Ages, but the recollection of the time when peasants roamed the forest, felling trees and cultivating the ash-covered clearings, remained very much alive. Labor and labor alone transformed *res nullius* into possession: because virgin soil was not touched by labor, it could not be owned. To the peasant's mind, appropriation of lumber was a crime, because it was the product of labor, whereas felling trees was not. Similarly, peasants believed that 'he who cuts down a tree with a beehive in it is a thief, because he appropriates human labor; he who cuts down a forest which no one has planted benefits from God's gift, which is as free as water and air.' Such a viewpoint, of course, had nothing in common with the rights of property as upheld in Russia's courts. No wonder that a high proportion of the criminal offenses for which peasants were convicted had to do with illegal cutting of trees. This attitude was not motivated by class antagonism: it applied as much to land and forest owned by fellow peasants. The belief that the expenditure of *manual* labor alone justified wealth was a fundamental article of faith of the Russian peasantry, and for this reason it despised landlords, bureaucrats, industrial workers, priests, and intellectuals as 'idlers'. Radical intellectuals exploited this attitude to denigrate businessmen and officials."

Pipes exaggerates the contempt of the ordinary peasant for non-peasants

here, and in particular for priests. The priest was often as poor as himself, and had to work his own allotment in order to survive. The period after the revolution showed that the solidarity between priest and peasant was still a powerful bond in many villages. In general, however, there can be no question but that a different attitude to landownership put many peasants at odds not only with the property-owning classes, officials and businessmen, but also with the Tsar and the Church, which upheld the traditional – that is to say, the Roman – concept of ownership. Moreover, the commune bred a distrust of wealthier, more successful peasants, the so-called "kulaks".

Pipes continues: "Such thinking underlay the universal belief of the Russian peasantry after Emancipation in the inevitable advent of a nationwide repartition of private land. In 1861, the liberated serfs could not understand why approximately one-half of the land which they had previously tilled was given to the landlords. At first, they refused to believe in the genuineness of such an absurd law. Later, after they had reconciled themselves to it, they decided that it was a temporary arrangement, soon to be annulled by a new law that would turn over to them, for communal distribution, all privately held land, including that of other peasants. Legends circulating in the villages had as one of their recurrent themes the prediction of the imminent appearance of a 'Savior' who would make all of Russia into a land of communes. 'The peasants believe,' according to A.N. Engelgardt, who spent many years living in their midst and wrote what is possibly the best book on their habits and mentality, 'that after the passage of some time, in the course of census-taking, there will take place a *general levelling of all the land* throughout Russia, just as presently, in every commune, at certain intervals, there takes place a repartitioning of the land among its members, each being allotted as much as he can manage. This completely idiosyncratic conception derives directly from the totality of peasant agrarian relations. In the communes, after a lapse of time, there takes place a redistribution of land, an *equalization* among its members. Under the [anticipated] general repartition, all the land will be repartitioned, and the communes will be equalized. The issue here is not simply the seizure of landlord land, as the journalists would have it, but the equalization of *all the land*, including that which belongs to peasants. Peasants who have purchased land as property, or, as they put it, "for eternity", talk exactly as do all the other peasants, and have no doubt whatever that the "lands to which they hold legal title" can be taken away from their rightful owners and given to others.' The soundness of this insight would be demonstrated in 1917-18.

"Peasants expected the national repartition of land to occur any day and to bring them vast increments: five, ten, twenty, and even forty hectares per household. It was a faith that kept the central Russian village in a state of permanent tension: 'In 1879 [following the war with Turkey] all expected that

a "new decree" would be issued concerning land. At the time, every small occurrence gave rise to rumors of a "new decree". Should a local village official… deliver the landlord a paper requiring some sort of statistical information about land, cattle, structures, etc., the village would at once call a meeting, and there it would be said that a paper had come to the landlord about the land, that soon a "new decree" would be issued, that in the spring surveyors would come to divide the land. Should the police prohibit the landlord of a mortgaged estate to cut lumber for sale, it was said that the prohibition was due to the fact that the Treasury would soon take over the forest, and then it would be available to all: pay one ruble and cut all you want. Should anyone take out a loan on his estate, it was said that the landlords had gotten wind that the land would be equalized, and so they hurried to turn their properties over to the Treasury for cash.'

"Such thinking meant that the Russian village was forever poised to attack private (non-communal) properties: it was kept in check only by fear. This produced a most unhealthy situation. The revolutionary potential was an ever-present reality, in spite of the peasant's anti-revolutionary, pro-monarchist sentiments. But then his radicalism was not inspired by political or even class animus. (When asked what should happen to landlords who had been evicted from their lands in consequence of the 'Black Repartition', some peasants would suggest they be placed on a government salary.) Tolstoy put his finger on the crux of the problem when shortly after Emancipation he wrote: 'The Russian revolution will not be against the Tsar and despotism but against landed property. It will say: from me, the human being, take what you want, but leave us all the land.'

"In the late nineteenth century, the peasant assumed that the nationwide repartition would be ordered by the Tsar: in peasant legends of the time, the 'Savior', the 'Great Leveller', was invariably the 'true tsar'. The belief fortified the peasantry's instinctive monarchism. Accustomed to the authority of the *bol'shak* in the household, by analogy it viewed the Tsar as the *bol'shak* or master (*khoziain*) of the country. The peasant 'saw in the Tsar the actual owner and father of Russia, who directly managed his immense household' – a primitive version of the patrimonial principle underlying Russian political culture. The reason why the peasant felt so confident that the Tsar would sooner or later order a general partition of the land was that, as he saw it, it lay in the monarch's interest to have all the lands justly distributed and properly cultivated.

"Such attitudes provide the background to the peasant's political philosophy, which, for all its apparent contradictions, had a certain logic. To the peasant, government was a power that compelled obedience: its main attribute was the ability to coerce people to do things which, left to

themselves, they would never do, such as pay taxes, serve in the army, and respect private property in land. By this definition, a weak government was no government. The epithet *Groznyi* applied to the mentally unbalanced and sadistic Ivan IV, usually rendered in English as 'Terrible', actually meant 'Awesome' and carried no pejorative meaning. Personas who possessed *vlast'* (authority) and did not exercise it in an 'awe-inspiring' manner could be ignored. Observance of laws for the peasant invariably represented submission to a *force majeure*, to the will of someone stronger, not the recognition of some commonly shared principle or interest. 'Today, as in the days of serfdom,' wrote the Slavophile Iurii Samarin, 'the peasant knows no other sure pledge of the genuineness of imperial commands than the display of armed force: a round of musketry still is to him the only authentic confirmation of the imperial commands.' In this conception, moral judgement of governments or their actions was as irrelevant as approval or condemnation of the vagaries of nature. There were no 'good' or 'bad' governments: there were only strong and weak ones, and strong ones were always preferable to weak ones. (Similarly, serfs used to prefer cruel but efficient masters to kindly but ineffective ones.) Weak rulers made it possible to return to primitive freedom or *volia*, understood as license to do whatever one wanted, unrestrained by man-made law. Russian governments took account of these attitudes and went to great lengths to impress on the country the image of boundless power. Experienced bureaucrats opposed freedom of the press and parliamentary government in good part because they feared that the existence of an overt, legitimized opposition would be interpreted by the peasantry as a sign of weakness and a signal to rebel."

Again, we may suspect Pipes of some exaggeration here. The large-scale peasant rebellions against Soviet power in Tambov province and Siberia in 1920-21, and still more the rebellion against collectivization in the Black Earth region in the late 1920s and early 1930s, show that large numbers of peasants *did* know the difference between a "good" and "bad" power, and by no means always identified might with right. Moreover, the rebellion in the Black Earth region was closely linked with the True Orthodox Church and a specifically Orthodox Christian doctrine of political legitimacy: that for Orthodox Russians only the Orthodox tsar could be a legitimate, God-established authority, and that the "authority" that overthrew him could only be an "anti-authority", established not by God but by the devil (Revelation 13.2).

Nevertheless, this traditional teaching came to the fore again in the peasantry only as a result of the fiery trial of the revolution, when the terrible sufferings caused by the new "authority" had forced the peasants to rethink their assumptions about power and return to the traditional teaching of the Church (especially the commandments on stealing, killing and envy). The

very success of the revolution, and the rapidity with which all forms of deference to authority collapsed in 1917, witnesses to the truth of Pipes' thesis for the *majority* of the peasants. And therefore the traditional hypothesis of right-wing historians and publicists that the revolution was caused mainly by the ideas of westernizing intellectuals needs to be modified at any rate to this extent: that if Westerners and westernizing ideas started and led the revolution, its success was guaranteed by the support it received from peasants who were scarcely touched by western ideas, but who had fallen away from the traditional teaching of the Orthodox Church in other ways.

As a sign of how the peasants were falling away from the Church, we may cite figures for frequency of communion. Gregory Benevich writes: "According to an analysis of the Church's books of registration of confession, it was quite usual for Russian peasants at the end of the 19th century not to confess their sins and not to partake of Holy Communion for several years. Only around 20 per cent of the peasants per year in Central Russia used to go to confession."

As Pipes writes, "At the turn of the century, observers noted subtle changes in the attitudes of the peasantry, particularly the younger generation. They were religiously less observant, less respectful of tradition and authority, restless, and somehow disaffected not only over land but over life in general.

"The authorities were especially perturbed by the behaviour of those who moved into the cities and industrial centers. Such peasants were no longer intimidated by uniformed representatives of authority and were said to act 'insolently'. When they returned to the village, permanently or to help out with the field work, they spread the virus of discontent. The Ministry of the Interior, observing this development, objected, on security grounds, to further industrialization and excessive rural mobility, but, for reasons previously stated, it had little success.

"One of the causes of changes in the mood of the peasantry seems to have been the spread of literacy, actively promoted by the authorities. The 1897 census revealed a very low level of literacy for the Russian Empire as a whole: only one in five (21 percent) of the inhabitants could read and write. But disaggregated the statistics looked considerably better. As a result of the combined efforts of rural schools and private associations, literacy showed a dramatic spurt among the young, especially males: in 1897, 45 percent of the Empire's male inhabitants aged ten to twenty-nine were recorded as literate. At this rate, the population of the Empire could have been expected to attain universal literacy by 1925.

"Literate peasants and workers read most of all religious books (the gospels and lives of saints) followed by cheap escapist literature, the Russian equivalent of 'penny dreadfuls' – a situation not unlike that observed in England half a century earlier…

"Growing literacy, unaccompanied by proportionately expanding opportunities to apply the knowledge acquired from reading, probably contributed to the restlessness of the lower classes. It has been noted in other regions of the world that schooling and the spread of literacy often produce unsettling effects. African natives educated in missionary schools, as compared with untutored ones, have been observed to develop a different mentality, expressed in an unwillingness to perform monotonous work and in lower levels of honesty and truthfulness. Similar trends were noted among young Russian peasants exposed to urban culture, who also seemed less ready to acquiesce to the routine of rural work and lived in a state of powerful, if unfocused expectations aroused by reading about unfamiliar worlds."

As Figes points out, "the growth of the cities far outstripped the pace of church-building in them, with the result that millions of new workers, having been uprooted from the village with its church, were consigned to live in a state of Godlessness. The industrial suburb of Orekhovo-Zuevo, just outside Moscow, for example, had only one church for 40,000 residents at the turn of the century. Iuzovka, the mining capital of the Donbass, today called Donetsk, had only two for 20,000."

Of course, industrial workers were still half-peasants, and often used to return to their villages at harvest time. But there, instead of recovering their Church consciousness in the more godly atmosphere of the village, they tended to infect the villagers with their own corrupt urban ways. This tendency was accentuated with time, as the older, more godly generation died off, and the younger, revolutionary generation took its place.

Moreover, continues Figes, "the traditional extended peasant family began to break up as the younger and more literate peasants struggled to throw off the patriarchal tyranny of the village and set up households of their own. They looked towards the city and its cultural values as a route to independence and self-worth. Virtually any urban job seemed desirable compared with the hardships and dull routines of peasant life. A survey of rural schoolchildren in the early 1900s found that half of them wanted to pursue an 'educated profession' in the city, whereas less than 2 per cent held any desire to follow in the footsteps of their peasant parents. 'I want to be a shop assistant,' said one schoolboy, 'because I do not like to walk in the mud. I want to be like those people who are cleanly dressed and work as shop

assistants.' Educators were alarmed that, once they had learned to read, many peasant boys, in particular, turned their backs on agricultural work and set themselves above the other peasants by swaggering around in raffish city clothes. Such boys, wrote a villager, 'would run away to Moscow and take any job'. They looked back on the village as a 'dark' and 'backward' world of superstition and crippling poverty – a world Trotsky would describe as the Russia of 'icons and cockroaches' – and they idealized the city as a force of social progress and enlightenment. Here was the basis of the cultural revolution on which Bolshevism would be built. For the Party rank and file was recruited in the main from peasant boys like these; and its ideology was a science of contempt for the peasant world. The revolution would sweep it all away…"

Ultimately, the gradual alienation of the peasantry from its Orthodox roots must be attributed to the failure of its teachers, the nobility, the intellectuals and even the clergy, to provide right teaching in word and deed. The close unity of upper and lower classes that we observe in medieval Russia was ruptured by the eighteenth-century tsars and nobility, and while the nineteenth-century tsars were much more pious, they were unable to do more than slow down, but not reverse, the destructive process their predecessors had initiated.

38. UNREST AMONG THE SOLDIERS

In addition to the Church and the peasantry there was a third major mainstay of the Tsarist regime: the army. The army had to defend the borders of the largest state in the world and double up as a police force in times of emergency. And so, "in 1900, according to one estimate, the Russian government was spending ten times more on its army than on education and the navy received more than the key ministries of Agriculture and Justice."

The Tsar particularly valued and loved the army; he loved nothing more than marching with it or inspecting it. However, as Margaret Macmillan writes, "the newly emerging political class [i.e. the liberals] saw the army as an army of the absolutist regime, its officers drawn from a narrow segment of society. Russian public opinion and Russian intellectuals did not take pride in colonial conquest or past military victories because such things seemed to have little to do with them. `In 1905, while the Russo-Japanese War still went on, Alexander Kuprin enjoyed great success with his novel, *The Duel,* which showed army officers as, among other things, drunken, dissolute, venal, lazy, bored, and brutal."

Foreigners recognized that the ordinary Russian soldier was brave and patient, but they were more sceptical about his superiors. As Max Hastings writes, "after attending Russian manoeuvres, the British military attaché wrote: 'we saw much martial spectacle, but very little serious training for modern war'. France's Gen. Joseph Joffre, invited to inspect Nicholas's forces in August 1913, agreed… The Russian army was burdened with weak leaders and chronic factionalism; one historian has written that it retained 'some of the characteristics of a dynastic bodyguard'. Its ethos was defined by brutal discipline rather than skill or motivation…"

Figes writes: "The patrimonial principle survived longer in the army than in any other institution of the Russian state. Nothing was closer to the Romanov court or more important to it than the military. The power of the Empire was founded on it, and the needs of the army and the navy always took precedence in the formulation of tsarist policies. All the most important reforms in Russian history had been motivated by the need to catch up and compete in war with the Empire's rivals in the west and south: Peter the Great's reforms had been brought about by the wars with Sweden and the Ottomans; those of Alexander II by military defeat in the Crimea…

"Many historians have depicted the army as a stalwart buttress of the tsarist regime. That was also the view of most observers until the revolution. Major Von Tettau from the German General Staff wrote in 1903, for example,

that the Russian soldier 'is full of selflessness and loyalty to his duty' in a way 'that is scarcely to be found in any other army of the world'. He did 'everything with a will' and was always 'unassuming, satisfied and jolly – even after labour and deprivation'. But in fact there were growing tensions between the military – in every rank – and the Romanov regime.

"For the country's military leaders the root of the problem lay in the army's dismal record in the nineteenth century, which many of them came to blame on the policies of the government. Defeat in the Crimean War (1853-6), followed by a costly campaign against Turkey (1877-8), and then the humiliation of defeat by the Japanese – the first time a major European power had lost to an Asian country – in 1904-5, left the army and the navy demoralized. The causes of Russia's military weakness were partly economic: her industrial resources failed to match up to her military commitments in an age of increasing competition between empires. But this incompetence also had a political source: during the later nineteenth century the army had gradually lost its place at the top of government spending priorities. The Crimean defeat had discredited the armed services and highlighted the need to divert resources from the military to the modernization of the economy. The Ministry of War lost the favoured position it had held in the government system of Nicholas I (1825-55) and became overshadowed by the Ministries of Finance and the Interior, which from this point on received between them the lion's share of state expenditure. Between 1881 and 1902 the military's share of the budget dropped from 30 per cent to 18 per cent. Ten years before the First World War the Russian army was spending only 57 per cent of the amount spent on each soldier in the German army, and only 63 per cent of that spent in the Austrian. In short, the Russian soldier went to war worse trained, worse equipped and more poorly serviced than his enemy. The army was so short of cash that it relied largely on its own internal economy to clothe and feed itself. Soldiers grew their own food and tobacco, and repaired their own uniforms and boots. They even earned money for the regiment by going off to work as seasonal labourers on landed estates, in factories and mines near their garrisons. Many soldiers spent more time growing vegetables or repairing boots than they did learning how to handle their guns. By reducing the military budget, the tsarist regime created an army of farmers and cobblers.

"The demoralization of the army was also connected to its increasing role in the suppression of civilian protests. The Russian Empire was covered with a network of garrisons. Their job was to provide more or less instant military assistance for the provincial governors or the police to deal with unrest. Between 1883 and 1903 the troops were called out nearly 1,500 times. Officers complained bitterly that this police duty was beneath the dignity of a professional soldier, and that it distracted the army from its proper military

purpose. They also warned of the damaging effect it was likely to have on the army's discipline. History proved them right. The vast majority of the private soldiers were peasants, and their morale was heavily influenced by the news they received from their villages. When the army was called out to put down the peasant uprisings of 1905-6 many of the units, especially in the peasant-dominated infantry, refused to obey and mutinied in support of the revolution. There were over 400 mutinies between the autumn of 1905 and the summer of 1906. The army was brought to the brink of collapse, and it took years to restore a semblance of order.

"Many of these mutinies were part of a general protest against the feudal conditions prevailing in the army. Tolstoy, who had served as an army officer in the Crimean War, described them in his last novel *Hadji-Murad*. The peasant soldiers, in particular, objected to the way their officers addressed them with the familiar 'your' (*tyi*) – normally used for animals and children – rather than the polite 'you' (*vyi*). It was how the masters had once addressed their serfs; and since most of the officers were nobles, and most of the soldiers were sons of former serfs, this mode of address symbolized the continuation of the old feudal world inside the army. The first thing a recruit did on joining the army was to learn the different titles of his officers: 'Your Honour' up to the rank of colonel; 'Your Excellency' for generals; and 'Your Radiance' or 'Most High Radiance' for titled officers. Colonels and generals were to be greeted not just with the simple hand salute but by halting and standing sideways to attention while the officer passed by for a strictly prescribed number of paces. The soldier was trained to answer his superiors in regulation phrases of deference: 'Not at all, Your Honour'; 'Happy to serve you, Your Excellency'. Any deviations were likely to be punished. Soldiers would expect to be punched in the face, hit in the mouth with the butt of a rifle and sometimes even flogged for relatively minor misdemeanours. Officers were allowed to use a wide range of abusive terms – such as 'scum' and 'scoundrel' – to humiliate their soldiers and keep them in their place. Even whilst off-duty the common soldier was deprived of the rights of a normal citizen. He could not smoke in public places, go to restaurants or theatres, ride in trams, or occupy a seat in a first- or second-class railway carriage. Civic parks displayed the sign: DOGS AND SOLDIERS FORBIDDEN TO ENTER. The determination of the soldiery to throw off this 'army serfdom' and gain the dignity of citizenship was to become a major story of the revolution.

"It was not just the peasant infantry who joined the mutinies after 1905. Even some of the Cossack cavalry – who since the start of the nineteenth century had been a model of loyalty to the Tsar – joined the rebellions. The Cossacks had specific grievances. Since the sixteenth century they had developed as an elite military caste, which in the nineteenth century came

under the control of the Ministry of War. In exchange for their military service, the Cossacks were granted generous tracts of fertile land – mainly on the southern borders they were to defend (the Don and Kuban) and the eastern steppes – as well as considerable political freedom for their self-governing communities *(voiskos*, from the word for 'war'). However, during the last decades of the nineteenth century the costs of equipping themselves for the cavalry, of buying saddles, harnesses and military-grade horses, as they were obliged to in the charters of their estate, became increasingly burdensome. Many Cossack farmers, already struggling in the depression, had to sell part of their livestock to meet their obligations and equip their sons to join. The *voiskos* demanded more and more concessions – both economic and political – as the price of their military service. They began to raise the flag of 'Cossack nationalism'…

"The government's treatment of the army provoked growing resentment among Russia's military elite. The fiercest opposition came from the new generation of so-called military professions emerging within the officer corps and the Ministry of War itself during the last decades of the old regime. Many of them were graduates from the Junker military schools, which had been opened up and revitalized in the wake of the Crimean defeat to provide a means for the sons of non-nobles to rise to the senior ranks. Career officials dedicated to the modernization of the armed services, they were bitterly critical of the archaic military doctrines of the elite academies and the General Staff. To them the main priorities of the court seemed to be the appointment of aristocrats loyal to the Tsar to the top command posts and the pouring of resources into what had become in the modern age a largely ornamental cavalry. They argued, by contrast, that more attention needed to be paid to the new technologies – heavy artillery, machine-guns, motor transportation, trench design and aviation – which were bound to be decisive in coming wars. The strains of modernization on the politics of the autocracy were just as apparent in the military as they were in all the other institutions of the old regime…"

There were similar problems in the Navy, in spite of the particular emphasis the tsar made on Navy funding after the 1905 war. The chief of the Naval General Staff, Vice-Admiral Prince Alexander Lieven was quite open about it. "Although most naval officers preferred to debate technical and strategic issues, in reality, wrote Lieven, the question of personnel was the most important and most dangerous problem facing the navy, as the mutinies during the 1905 revolution had shown. Lieven was under no illusion that relations between officers and sailors could be divorced from class conflict in the broader society. Between officers and men, he wrote, 'there exists an abyss from birth which it is difficult to cross from either side. Recently under the influence of agitation there has even been created a directly hostile attitude

among peasants towards the lords. But even without this, the intellectual and moral level of the two sides to so different that it is difficult for them to understand each other.'…"

Defeat at the hands of Japan in 1905, continues Lieven, "made the need for radical reform especially evident. Disputes rages over what reforms were needed and how to implement them. The upper ranks of the army were a wasps' nest of individual ambitions and jealousies that intersected with patron-client networks and arguments over fortresses, operational plans, and other professional concerns. The creation of the Duma in 1906 complicated the war minister's job. After the changes in the electoral law in June, 1907, parliament was dominated by libear-conservatives and nationalist parties that supported generous military budgets and took a strong interest in the resurrection of Russian military power. In terms of military matters, the Duma's leading member was Aleksandr Guchkov, head of the liberal-conservative party in power (1906-11)… Nicholas distrusted most politicians, but he especially disliked Guchkov, whom he viewed (correctly) as an unscrupulous adventurer. But the conflict between the monarchy and parliament was also an inevitable result of the creation of representative institutions. In seventeenth-century England, control over the army had been a key source of conflict between Charles I and Parliament in the years leading up to the Civil War. Similarly, control over the army was at the core of the Prussian constitutional crisis of the 1860s. By winning this conflict for the crown, Bismarck did much to shape not just civil-military relations in the German Empire but also German politics as a whole…"

In the end the army proved to be one of the Russian Empire's critical weak points. In 1905 it wavered in its loyalty. And in 1917 it was the open treason of the generals that forced the Tsar to abdicate from the throne…

39. THREE RUSSIAS: PETERSBURG, KISHINEV AND SAROV

Russia at the turn of the century was a country of enormous size, population and contrasting social classes. Three of the biggest and most important classes were the nobility, the revolutionary Jews and the Christian peasantry. All three drew attention to themselves in the year 1903.

The nobility, writes Douglas Smith, comprised almost 1.9 million people, about 1.5 percent of the entire population of the Russian Empire. They were a diverse group, divided by nationality (Russians, Poles, Georgians, Baltic Germans [and Tatars]), religion (Russian Orthodoxy, Catholicism, Lutheranism), education and wealth (from a great deal of both to little of either), and political outlook (from reactionaries to revolutionaries). There were hereditary nobles, whose privileged status passed to their offspring, and personal nobles, whose did not. So great was the diversity among the empire's nobility that historians continue to debate whether it even deserves to be considered a distinct social class. If there was one thing that defined a noble, it was, as a commentator wrote in 'The Tasks of the Nobility' in 1895, a certain quality 'of being among the chosen, of being privileged, of not being the same as all other people'. The Russian nobility was never, however, a class of idle rich. Rather, it had always been a service class that initially derived its privileges and then increasingly its own identity from serving the grand princes of Muscovy and later the tsars of imperial Russia whether at court, in the military, or in the administration.

"At the top of the nobility was the aristocratic elite, roughly a hundred or so families with great landed wealth dating back to at least the eighteenth century. These nobles often held high positions at court or in the government. The aristocracy was typically old, titled, and rich. It intermarried and had a sense of itself as a self-defined group. Aristocrats belonged to the same clubs and salons, and the young men served in the elite imperial guards regiments like the Chevaliers Gardes, the Horse Guard, and the Emperor's Life Guard Hussars. Part of the aristocracy (including the Golitsyns, Gagarins, Dolgorukys, and Volkonskys) descended from the ancient princely dynasties of Riurik and Gedymin; others came from the nontitled boyar families of the Muscovite court, most notably the Naryshkins and the Sheremetevs, a branch of which acquired the title of count under Peter the Great; or from other old noble families that had served in the cavalry units, such as the Shuvalovs, Vorontsovs, and Orlovs."

"'Petersburg society'," writes Montefiore, "was not as important as it liked to think it was. This was the beginning of the Silver Age of poetry and art (following the Golden Age earlier in the century) in which, dissatisfied by Orthodox religion, Victorian morality and scientific rationalism, and

exhilarated by the rush of the modern, the avant-garde tested the meaning of art, faith and pleasure by experimenting with imagery, language and dance, as well as sexual adventurism, necromancy and narcotics. While a powerful mercantile class of textile and railway tycoons emerged in the cities, the nobility was mortgaging its estates, a retreat before the energy of the merchants as played out in Anton Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard*."

The aristocratic elite displayed itself particularly during the pre-lenten balls in the Winter Palace. "The Ball of 1903," writes Smith, "was to be imperial Russia's last great ball. What made it so spectacular and unusual was in large part its special theme. Although held on the two-hundredth-year anniversary of the capital's founding by Peter the Great, [Tsar] Nicholas chose as the theme for the ball the reign of Peter's father, Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and all the guests were instructed to come in costumes from the seventeenth century. Such was the excitement that vast sums of money were spent on designers and the finest tailors to create exquisite outfits of fancy brocades, silks, and satin decorated with gold, pearls, and diamonds. The men came attired as boyars, gunners, falconers, and Cossack hetmans; the ladies, as boyarinas, peasants (elaborately costumed ones anyway), and Muscovite ladies of the court. Some dressed as concrete historical figures. Count Sergei Sheremetev, for example, came as Field Marshal Count Boris Sheremetev, his great-great-grandfather. The emperor came as Tsar Alexei Mikhailovich, and Empress Alexandra, wearing a costume estimated at a million rubles, as Tsaritsa Maria Ilinichna. So enormous was its effect that the ball was repeated shortly thereafter at the home of Count Alexander Sheremetev."

The ball left Grand Duke Alexander "with a bad feeling. He recalled an evening like it some twenty-five years earlier under Alexander II, but the times had changed. 'A new and hostile Russia glared through the large windows of the palace,' he wrote. 'This magnificent pageant of the seventeenth century must have made a strange impression on the foreign ambassadors; while we danced, the workers were striking and the clouds in the Far East were hanging dangerously low...'"

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The contrast between the world of the aristocratic elite and that of the striking workers and their Jewish revolutionary leaders could hardly have been greater. The Jews were murdering thousands of government officials – these were the real "pogroms" of the period. And it was these murders, together with the familiar complaints against Jewish money-lenders, that excited "counter-pogroms" on the part of the Orthodox Christian peasantry.

Alexander Solzhenitsyn writes: "Jewish pogroms were stirred up at all

times and only in the South-West of Russia (as also was the case in 1881)." And on April 6, 1903 – the last day of the Jewish Pascha and the first day of the Orthodox Pascha – a pogrom broke out in Kishinev, capital of the province of Moldavia in South-West Russia. According to the official figures drawn up in the indictment by the procurator of the local court, V.N. Goremykin, it began with "the usual clashes between Jews and Christians which have always taken place in recent years at Pascha" and with "the hostility of the local Christian population towards the Jews". And then "two weeks before Pascha… rumours began to circulate in Kishinev that there would be a slaughter of Jews in the forthcoming feast".

A particularly inflammatory role was played here by the newspaper *Bessarabets*, whose editor, Pavolachi Krushevan, also published *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*. The *Protocols* purported to be the minutes of a meeting of Jewish elders somewhere in the West, but are in fact largely plagiarized from Maurice Joly's *Dialogue aux Enfers entre Montesquieu et Machiavel*, published in 1864. When the forgery was demonstrated to Tsar Nicholas II, he said: "Drop the *Protocols.* One cannot defend a pure cause by dirty methods." Krushevan's *Bessarabets* printed "from day to day sharp articles of an anti-Jewish tendency, which did not fail to leave a trace… among the salesmen and petty scribes, etc. of the uneducated people of Bessarabia. The latest provocative articles of *Bessarabets* contained communications about the murder in Dubossary of a Christian child supposedly carried out by Jews by ritual means…"

The pogrom began after the murder of a Russian man and the death of a Russian girl in the local Jewish hospital. According to the indictment, 42 people were killed, including 38 Jews, and about 500 Jewish shop fronts were destroyed. By April 9, 816 people had been arrested, of whom 664 were charged with crimes.

"The conclusion of the indictment was: the disorders 'grew to the indicated proportions only thanks to the incompetence of the police, who did not have the required leadership… The preliminary investigation has not unearthed any evidence that would indicate that the above-mentioned disorders were prepared beforehand.'

"And they were not unearthed by any subsequent investigation.

"But in spite of this, the Jewish 'Bureau of Defence' (with the participation of the very influential M. Vinaver, G. Sliozberg, L. Bramson, M. Kulisher, A. Braudo, S. Pozner and M. Krol), had no sooner heard about the pogrom in Petersburg than they excluded from the beginning any other causes of it than a tsarist plot: 'Who gave the order for the organization of the pogrom, who directed the dark forces that carried it out?' – 'Immediately we learned under

what circumstances the Kishinev slaughter took place, it became clear for us that this diabolic undertaking would never have taken place… if it had not been thought up in the Department of Police and carried out in fulfilment of orders from there'. Although, of course, writes the same M. Krol in the 40s of the 20th century, 'the scoundrels organized the Kishinev pogrom in strict secrecy, we are profoundly convinced that the Kishinev slaughter was organized from above, with the knowledge, and perhaps even on the initiative of Plehve. Only if we had the most indisputable evidence against them could we tear the mask from these highly-placed murderers and place them in a fitting light before the whole world. Therefore we decided to send the well-known lawyer Zarudny to Kishinev.' 'He was the most suitable person to carry out the mission that we had laid on him', he 'took it upon himself to discover the hidden springs of the Kishinev slaughter', after which the police 'to make a diversion arrested some tens of robbers and thieves'. (Let us recall that on the day after the pogrom 816 were arrested.) – Zarudny collected and took away from Kishinev 'exceptionally important material', that is to say: 'that the main culprit and organizer of the pogrom was the chief of the Kishinev garrison Levendal'".

This "exceptionally important material" was never published anywhere. Goremykin looked into the accusations against Levendal and found them baseless. But Krushevan, whose inflammatory articles had indeed helped the pogrom on arriving in Petersburg two months later, was attacked and wounded with a knife by Pinkhas Dashevsky… The government sacked the governor of Bessarabia, while Plehve issued a circular to all governors, city bosses and heads of police expressing disturbance at the inactivity of the Kishinev authorities and calling for decisive action to cut of violence.

Nor was the Orthodox Church silent. The Holy Synod issued a circular ordering the clergy to take measures to root out hatred of the Jews. Fr. John of Kronstadt said: "Instead of a Christian feast they have arranged a disgustingly murderous feast to Satan." And Bishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said: "The terrible punishment of God will attain those evil-doers who shed blood asking for that of the God-man, His Most Pure Mother, the Apostles and Prophets'; 'that they should know that the Jewish race, which has been rejected up to now, is dear to the Spirit of God, and that every one who would want to offend it will anger the Lord.'"

The Jews and radicals inside Russia, and the European and American press outside Russia, were loud in their accusations that the Russian government was responsible for the Kishinev pogrom. The newspaper magnate William Hurst even used the fateful word "holocaust"… On May 18 *The Times* of London published a letter of a "completely secret letter" of Plehve to the Kishinev governor von Raaben in which Plehve supposedly asked the

governor not to put down any disturbances against the Jews but only to inform him about them. The letter turned out to be a forgery, as even pro-Semite sources accept. However, this did not prevent the 1996 edition of *The Jewish Encyclopaedia* from reiterating the accusation as if it were fact...

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Far from the superficial glitter of Petersburg, and the bloody violence of Kishinev, a truly holy feast was celebrated in August, 1903 in the monastery of Sarov, deep in patriarchal Russia. The occasion was the glorification – on the initiative of the Tsar - of St. Seraphim of Sarov (+1832), perhaps the greatest saint of the Petersburg period of Russian history.

The Russian Church had undertaken few glorifications of saints during the St. Petersburg period of her history. However, early in his reign Tsar Nicholas II initiated no less than six.

As Tikhon Sisoev writes, the most important of these was that of St. Seraphim on July 19, 1903: "The question of the canonization of the Sarov ascetic was first raised in 1883. At that time the leader of the Moscow women gymnasiums, Viktorov, wrote a letter to the over-procurator, Konstantin Pobedonostsev, suggesting that 'the beginning of the reign of the emperor [Alexander III] should be marked by the uncovering of the relics of the pious God-pleaser who was honoured throughout Russia. However, there was no reply. Later other private suggestions were rejected.

"In 1894 on the initiative of Igumen Raphael (Trukhin), the superior of the Sarov monastery, a detailed life of Seraphim of Sarov was composed in which confirmed testimonies of 94 miracles from the life of the ascetic were documented. The Synod acted in an ambiguous way: they refused the canonization, but continued to gather information. Thus the just-started process of glorification hung in the air, and it is not known how long the silence of the Synod would have continued if it had not been for the 'cunning' of Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov).

"... Archimandrite Seraphim was an energetic man. Having obtained access to the archives of the Diveyevo monastery, he assembled a whole complex of various information about the life and miracles of Seraphim of Sarov, which he systematized in chronological order. As a result of this investigation, a book was published, *The Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Monastery*, which the archimandrite, bypassing the Synod, handed to Nicholas II after a personal audience with his Majesty. We find evidence of this in the diary entries of General Alexander Kireev, who points out that the procurator Pobedonostsev afterwards called Archimandrite Seraphim 'a great

scoundrel and rogue'. The question of the canonization began to get moving.

"In the spring of 1902 the over-procurator was invited by the emperor to a family breakfast at which Nicholas II suggested providing – already within a few days – a decree on the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov. Pobedonostsev objected that such haste seemed to him inappropriate when it was a matter of glorifying a man. The empress cut in: 'His Majesty can do anything.' The suggestion became an order.

"Why did the Royal Family adopt such unbending determination? There were various reasons for this. The Sarov ascetic had already been venerated for a long time in the Romanov family. Thanks to the prayers of Seraphim of Sarov, it was thought, the seven-year-old daughter of Alexander II had been healed. Empress Alexandra Fyodorovna believed that it was precisely through his prayers that a boy – the future heir to the throne - would finally be born in the family. But apart from his personal veneration for the saint, Nicholas II was seeking in the canonization of Seraphim the resolution of profound internal political problems. In the opinion of many historians, his Majesty n the course of the first half of his reign was trying to come closer to the people. '"Noble Russia" since 1861 [the emancipation of the serfs] had been inexorably falling apart,' writes G.P. Fedorov, the Russian historian and philosopher. 'The Autocracy did not have the strength to tear itself away from its noble roots and would perish together with it. Russia, which had been frozen for twenty years by Pobedonostsev, was clearly rotting under the snow.' It was precisely the widespread veneration of Seraphim of Sarov among the people that, in the eyes of the emperor himself, provided an opportunity to find a point of contact between the simple people, the intelligentsia and the nobility.

"One way or another, Pobedonostsev submitted, and the *Church Gazette* of July, 1902 announced the beginning of the preparation of the official canonization. In the same month the empress sent gifts to Sarov Desert: a lampada and church vestments. It seemed that the glorification of Seraphim of Sarov was an accomplished fact. But new hindrances arose...

"On January 11, 1903, a commission headed by Metropolitan Vladimir of Moscow arrived in Sarov to unearth and examine the relics of Seraphim of Sarov. Metropolitan Benjamin (Fedchenko) remembered: "The body of the saint had been subject to corruption, but the bones, which were in a perfect state of preservation, were laid out correctly. The hairs of the head and beard had also been preserved; they were of a grayish-ginger colour. The results of the commission were handed to the Most Holy Synod. 'Why did they go off into some wood to find only some bones?' said one of the members of the Synod. Everybody was disturbed – if the body had been corrupted, it meant

that Seraphim was not a saint.

"The point was that during the Synodal period the idea had become embedded in the people's and clergy's consciousness that the holiness of a reposed man was witnessed not only by his life and miracles, but also by the incorruption of his relics. In order to refute this non-obligatory condition of canonization, a whole theological investigation was required. Its results were published in the declaration of Metropolitan Anthony (Vadkovsky): 'Incorruption of relics is by no means considered to be a sign of the glorification of the holy God-pleasers. When there is incorruption of relics, this is a miracles, but only in addition to those miracles which are worked through their mediation.' The doubts had been dispelled.

"After this the Synod declared themselves satisfied with the results of the inspection of the relics and prepared a report for the emperor in which they expressed their agreement with the canonization of Seraphim of Sarov. Having read the report, Nicholas II placed the following resolution on it: 'I have read this with a feeling of true joy and deep emotion'.

"A colossal amount of work was carried out in connection with the organization of the coming festivity in the short period from the beginning of 1903: special 'missionary' trains were sent to Sarov, new hotels were built, medical care points were organized. By July [17/]30 about 300,000 pilgrims and more than 500 clergy had arrived in the town. That evening his Majesty himself arrived. Prince Vladimir Volkonsky, who also came to Sarov, recalled: 'There was a real unity. Not seeming, but sincere and complete, involving the whole assembled people, every person, of whatever class he was. Such a tenderness and kindness reigned over the whole of Sarov and over all who had come under its shade.' We find the same impression in the diary of Nicholas II: 'A huge exaltation of spirit both from the triumphal event and from the amazing mood of the people.'"

"The Royal Family," writes Archpriest Lev Lebedev, "had known about the great Wonderworker of the Russian Land for a long time. But a particular impression was made on the Tsar and Tsarina by the book *A Chronicle of the Seraphimo-Diveyevo Women's Monastery*, written and given personally to Nicholas II by Archimandrite Seraphim (Chichagov) – a scion of a noble family, one of the most educated and talented representatives of the nobility, who wanted to exchange a military career for monastic asceticism… In the *Chronicle* there were so many teachings, words of the holy elder of Sarov, prophecies, information about his miracles that the Royal Family was inspired with great faith in him! The triumphant glorification of Seraphim of Sarov, who had already been widely venerated in the people for a long time, was appointed from July 17-20, 1903. The Tsar came to Sarov with his whole

family, his mother, the widowed Empress Maria Fyodorovna, his brothers, the Great Princes, other members of the Imperial House, and his suite. The Royal Family had never undertaken such a pilgrimage before. It was unlike any of the other journeys undertaken by the Tsar and Tsaritsa to holy places. Up to 300,000 worshippers from every corner of Russia assembled in Sarov for those days. Nicholas II tried to be present at all the long, almost unending services. The peak of the festivities was the transfer of the relics of St. Seraphim from the monastery's hospital church of SS. Zosimas and Sabbatius, where he had been buried, into the Dormition cathedral of the Sarov community on July 18. The coffin with the relics was borne on their shoulders by the Tsar, the Great Princes and the hierarchs, tightly surrounded by a sea of people."

The festivities were truly an icon of Holy Russia: the Royal Family and the Great Princes mixed with thousands of peasants in a natural union that only the true worship of God and the veneration of His saints can produce. Many miracles of healing took place, and those who were present witnessed to the extraordinary spiritual peace and joy that was granted the worshippers. The Royal Family were praying for their own miracle – the birth of a male...

"Something unseen and unheard took place. The Russian Tsar and his Family were for several days in immediate prayerful union with hundreds of thousands (!) of Russian people, praying together with them, in their very heart. The secret police were as it were dissolved in this mass; in fact, there was essentially no need for its presence! It was truly 'with one heart and one mouth' that the Orthodox people glorified God, the God-pleaser Seraphim and God's Anointed, Tsar Nicholas II!... *Such* a meeting with Holy Russia, represented by *such a multitude of the people* and with the breathing of *the special grace of God*, bound up with the glorification of St. Seraphim of Sarov, turned out to be *the first* for the Royal Couple and… *the last*…

"The Sarov days of 1903 became *a key event in the whole reign.* During the festivities the Tsar received from the widow of P.A. Motovilov a letter of St. Seraphim of Sarov addressed *precisely to him*, Nicholas II ['to the Tsar in whose reign I shall be glorified'], sealed (but never opened!) with the soft part of a piece of bread. The Tsar read the letter and his face changed, and after reading it… he wept... To this day nobody knows what was in the letter. We can guess that it contained some kind of prophecy about his destiny, or the destiny of Russia. In the same period Nicholas II visited the fool-for-Christ Pasha of Sarov… She symbolically (by means of a doll) foretold to the Tsar *the birth of a son*, and spoke much with him in figurative language. The Tsar left amazed and joyful: 'I have travelled across the whole of Russia and have not met such a saint. Everyone has received me as Tsar, but she as a simple person,' he said. Pasha placed the portrait of Nicholas II in her prayer corner

and made many prostrations to the earth in front of it, which greatly exhausted her cell-attendants who used to lift and lower Pasha since she could not make prostrations herself because of illness. 'Matushka, why are you praying to the Tsar?!' they asked. 'You know nothing,' replied the blessed one. 'He will be higher than all the Tsars.' When war began in 1914 Pasha, covered in tears, began to kiss the feet of the Tsar on the portrait, saying: 'Dear one, it is already near the end,' and sent him the message: '*Your Majesty, come down from the Throne yourself*'…

"The visit to Sarov quickly produced results: On July 30 / August 12, 1904 the Heir to the Throne Alexis Nikolayevich was born! We can imagine the joy of the Crown-Bearing Parents! In the first months of the life of the new-born it was still not known what a terrible disease nestled in him He looked completely healthy, he was simply a beautiful child…

"Now we can understand how the thought of the Tsar about the return of Russia to the pre-Petrine foundations of life were linked into one with the impressions and feeling that arose in the Royal Couple in the Sarov days…"

The Sarov days were like a last warm glow from the fading fire of Holy Rus'. They demonstrated that the ideal of a nation united by the Orthodox faith and in submission to a benevolent Tsar-Father was still a living reality. And indeed, there were many great saints still living in Russia at that time, such as the Optina Elders and St. John of Kronstadt, and many hundreds of thousands more who would suffer martyrdom during the Soviet period. These holy people were the fruit of Holy Russia, and its justification. And this holy fruit ripened under the protection of the tsarist regime and with its active support, the proof of which would be the holiness of the Tsar-Martyr himself and his martyred family…

Dominic Lieven writes: "Between 1895 and 1901 the Empress had given birth to four daughters: Olga, Tatiana, Marie and Anastasia. The four little girls were beautiful, healthy and lively children who were greatly loved by their parents. Nicholas was a fine father and the family circle was full of love, warmth and trust. If the Emperor had a favourite it was probably Tatiana, whose personality came closest to that of her mother. Olga, his eldest daughter, was the most thoughtful, sensitive and intelligent of the four. Marie, the third, with huge grey eyes and a warm-hearted, simple, friendly manner, was always the easiest to get on with at first acquaintance. Anastasia, born in 1901, was notorious as the family's comedian. Under Russian law, however, no woman could inherit the crown. Had Nicholas died before 1904, the throne would have gone to his kind-hearted but weak-willed younger brother, the Grand Duke Michael. Since Michael was a bachelor in 1904 and subsequently contracted an illegal and morganatic marriage, the Romanov

inheritance would then have passed to a younger brother of Alexander III, the Grand Duke Vladimir, and his descendants. Tension and mutual dislike between the 'Vladimir branch' and the imperial couple were never far below the surface in the twentieth century. Much therefore hung on the life of the little boy born in August, 1904. All the more horrifying was the discovery that the child had haemophilia.

"In the Edwardian era there was no treatment for haemophilia and little way of alleviating the terrible pain it periodically caused. The chances were against a haemophiliac living into middle age, let alone being able to pursue a normal life. For any parents who loved their children as intensely as the imperial couple did, the physical and emotional strain of a haemophiliac son was bound to be great. In the case of Nicholas and Alexandra, however, matters were made worse by the fact that it was considered unthinkable to admit that the future autocrat of all the Russias was incurably ill and quite possibly doomed to an early death. The natural sympathy and understanding which might have flowed to the parents had therefore to be foregone. Moreover, however harrowing one of Aleksei's periodic illnesses might be, a monarch - let alone a Russian autocrat - had always to keep up appearances. It says something for Nicholas's extraordinary self-control that, adoring Aleksei as he did, he nevertheless never let the mask slip. As Alexandra herself once wrote to him, 'you will always keep a cheery face and carry all hidden inside.'

"Inevitably, however, it was the mother who bore the greater burden during her son's illnesses, not to mention the incessant worry even when he was relatively healthy. Nor could she escape the guilt born of the knowledge that she was the cause of her son's suffering [for the haemophiliac gene was transmitted through the maternal line] and of the extra burden of worry about his dynasty's future that had been placed on her husband's shoulders. Physically frail and always very highly strung, the Empress poured her last drop of energy into watching over her son and nursing him during his attacks... The effort cost the Empress dear. She was often too ill and exhausted to play the role of a monarch's consort, incurring great odium as a result. Moreover, the strain of Alexis' illness pushed his mother close to nervous collapse. As the Grand Duchess Olga commented, 'the birth of a son, which should have been the happiest event in the lives of Nicky and Alicky, became their heaviest cross…'"

In spite of the joyous Sarov Days, which demonstrated the survival of true faith among the people, the fact was that *on the whole* the Russian people were falling away from the faith and their loyalty to the Autocracy. And not only among the westernized educated classes. The peasants, too – that class that the tsars believed was most devoted to Altar and Throne – were losing their

zeal.

For the time being, however, this was hidden from the consciousness of the tsar himself. He was not to know that the rapturous expressions of devotion he received from peasant delegations in many parts of the country, and most strikingly in Sarov, came from an ever-dwindling proportion of the common people. He was not to know that Sarov, 1903 marked the high point of his reign, after which it would be a steady descent into anarchy…

40. THE RUSSO-JAPANESE WAR

"In November 1902," writes Richard Pipes, "high-ranking Russian officials held a secret conference in Yalta to discuss China's complaints about Russia's treaty violations and the problems caused by the reluctance of foreigners to invest in Russia's Far Eastern ventures. It was agreed that Russia could attain her economic objectives in Manchuria only by intense colonization; but for Russians to settle there, the regime needed to tighten its hold on the area. It was the unanimous opinion of the participants, Witte included, that Russia had to annex Manchuria, or, at the very least, bring it under closer control. In the months that followed, the Minister of War, A.N. Kuropatkin, urged aggressive action to protect the Trans-Siberian Railroad: in his view, unless Russia was prepared to annex Manchuria she should withdraw from there. In February 1903, Nicholas agreed to annexation."

Another bone of contention was Korea. "The ruler of Korea," writes J.M. Roberts, "had only taken his title of emperor in 1897; only in 1901 did his government first decide to send representatives to foreign countries (even the Chinese had already done this). Several nations had interests in Korea: the Americans and British had long encouraged the 'opening' of the country to trade and reform (as they saw it), the Russians and the Japanese competed there for political supremacy and possible territorial aggrandizement, and (in theory as the suzerain power but actually increasingly powerless in Korean affairs) the Chinese went on claiming that Korea was a dependency of the Middle Kingdom. This was one reason for the Japanese (who had successfully occupied Seoul in the 1890s during a war against China) to promote 'westernizing' influences in the court and among officials."

"I do not want to take Korea for myself," said the Tsar in October, 1901, "but in no way can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. This would be a *casus belli*. A conflict is inevitable, but I hope that it will not take place earlier than in four years' time – then we will have dominance at sea. This is our main interest. The Siberia railway will be finished in five to six years' time."

"Russia's main interest in Korea," writes Dominic Lieven, "lay in the proximity of that country's northern border to Vladivostok, which made domination of the whole country by another great power worrying. In addition, the Russian navy lusted after a Korean port and feared that if the Japanese controlled both sides of the Straits of Tsushima they could easily cut communications between Vladivostok and Port Arthur. The Koreans themselves looked to Russia for protection from Japan, which was clearly the greatest threat to their independence, and offered Russia many inducements

to occupy itself in their affairs. But the greatest single complicating factor in Russia's relations with Korea was the large timber concession which a number of aristocrats close to Nicholas had secured on the river Yalu, with the aim of building up a Russian bridgehead in northern Korea.

"The leaders in the Yalu enterprise were A.M. Bezobrazov and V.M. Vonlyarlyarsky. Both came from prominent families of the Russian aristocracy and were former officers of the Chevaliers Gardes, the most exclusive regiment in the Russian army. Bezobrazov gained access to Nicholas II through the former Minister of the Imperial Court, Count I.I. Vorontsov-Dashkov. Neither Bezobrazov nor Vonlyarlyarsky were interested in the Yalu enterprise for the sake of personal gain. They saw their company as a means by which non-official patriots could out-manoeuvre bureaucratic caution and push forward Russia's cause in the East. There was to be a latter-day version of Britain's East India Company but without its initially commercial priorities. The whole scheme bore the stamp of aristocratic arrogance and amateurism. Its leaders were convinced of their own innate superiority to mere bureaucrats. Without knowing the East, they nevertheless urged on Nicholas the belief that the Orientals would back down in the face of a confident show of Russian power. There was more than a touch of opera to the Bezobrazov affair. Rather typical was the fact that at one point secret correspondence between Bezobrazov and Nicholas II was sent through their respective batmen so that the ministers should be kept in the dark about it. But there was nothing funny in the effect of Bezobrazov's influence, which was both to increase Nicholas's distrust of his official advisers and to encourage him to take a tougher and more intransigent line with the Japanese and Chinese governments. In October 1901, for instance, the Emperor told Prince Henry of Prussia that 'I do not want to seize Korea – but under no circumstances can I allow the Japanese to become firmly established there. That would be a *casus belli*.' Here was the voice of Bezobrazov not of Nicholas's ministerial advisers, whose position on Korea was much less bellicose.

"Bezobrazov, Vonlyarlyarsky and their supporters in particular urged on Nicholas two ideas to which he was very inclined to listen. They told him that Russia was a proud and mighty country which should speak in a strong voice and take no cheek from foreigners, least of all Orientals. This Guards officers' patriotism was music to his ears. His aristocratic advisers, loathing the bureaucracy and above all Witte, also told Nicholas that he was the captive of his ministers, who colluded in keeping information from him, imposing their own views and sabotaging his instructions when they conflicted with their own interests. By 1900 Nicholas felt this to be true, not merely as regards Far Eastern policy but across the whole range of government business. Frustrated by his seeming powerlessness and aware of mounting criticism of his rule, he

turned more and more to unofficial advisers in an effort to secure alternative sources of information and greater freedom from ministerial control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic control. Among these advisers Bezobrazov was typical in his aristocratic origins and in his appeal to Nicholas's patriotic and anti-bureaucratic instincts. In July 1901 Alexander Polovtsov commented that 'in no field of policy is there a principled, well considered and firmly directed course of action. Everything is done in bursts, haphazardly, under the influence of the moment, according to the demands of this or that person and the intercessions emerging from various corners. The young Tsar feels more and more contempt for the organs of his own power and begins to believe in the beneficial strength of his own autocracy, which he manifests sporadically, without preliminary discussion and without any link to the overall course of policy.'

"As in his domestic policy Nicholas sought to balance between his groups of advisers, drawing information from both and thereby seeking a basis on which he could determine policy for himself. This had a disastrous impact on Russia's Far Eastern policy in 1902-3 and on the way it was perceived by foreigners, above all the Japanese. It was not merely that Bezobrazov's advice was dangerous and mistaken. Outsiders did not know what Petersburg's policy was. Faced by criticism that divisions between ministers and unofficial advisers were causing government policy in East Asia to be incoherent and uncoordinated, in August 1903 Nicholas appointed Admiral Alekseev Viceroy of the Far East and subordinated to him all responsibility not only for civil and military affairs but also for diplomatic relations with Tokyo and Peking. This was to make a bad situation worse. Alekseev was a sailor, not a diplomat or a statesman. By definition neither he nor other officials in the East could have a balanced overall grasp of the Empire's many interests for they were committed to pursuing a forward policy in their own bailiwick.

"The Japanese now had to deal with Alekseev in Port Arthur but they knew, of course, that the Viceroy's decisions would have to be ratified by the Tsar, and therefore by those high officials to whom he chose to listen, in Petersburg. Confusion was compounded by the fact that during the critical period between August and November 1903 Nicholas II was seldom in his capital, spending most of his time on official and private visits to Western Europe. Though Japanese counsels were themselves divided, had Russia consistently stood out for a free hand for herself in Manchuria in return for Japanese control over Korea, Tokyo would almost certainly have agreed in the end. The demilitarization of northern Korea could have been obtained through such a deal had Petersburg offered some concessions in southern Manchuria. But the Russians overestimated the strength of their position, and the incoherence and delay in their responses to Tokyo convinced the Japanese that Petersburg was simply prevaricating. Nicholas's own statements

betrayed his uncertainty and miscalculations. In October 1903 he telegraphed to Alekseev: 'I do not want war between Russia and Japan and will not permit this war. Take all measures so that there is no war.' In late December, however, he commented that the situation reminded him of the 1895 crisis when Japan backed down under firm Russian pressure and surrendered Port Arthur. Referring to Japan, Nicholas remarked: 'all the same it is a barbarian country. Which is better: to risk war or to continue with concessions?' In February 1904 the Japanese permitted Russia no more wavering and attacked Port Arthur."

At first, the whole country united behind the Tsar in a war that everybody assumed Russia must win. But the "barbarian" Japanese provided a crushing antidote to this pride. In April they crossed the Yalu River into Russian-occupied Manchuria, forcing the Russians back into Port Arthur. After a long and heroic siege Port Arthur surrendered in January, 1905.

On land, two armies of over 600,000 men now each faced each other in some of the biggest battles in history. Although the Russians won some battles, they were defeated at Mukden in Manchuria. They lost 89,500 in killed and prisoners, and the Japanese – 67,500. Finally, in May, Admiral Rozhdestvensky's Baltic fleet, which had sailed all the way around the world to the Korean bay of Tsushima, was annihilated. The Russians lost 5000 sailors killed with 6000 captured, while only 117 Japanese sailors died.

The Russo-Japanese war is the first instance of a phenomenon that was to be of major importance in 1917: the financing of Russia's enemies by American Jews. Archpriest Lev Lebedev asserts that "at the end of 1903 the American Jewish banker Jacob Schiff, Morgan and also 'First National Bank' and 'National City Bank' loaned Japan 30 million dollars so that she should attack Russia… The Japanese information services were actively *helped by the Jews.* Some of them acted as spies in the Russian army, others tried to demoralize it, which is witnessed by the commander-in-chief of the armies in the Far East, General Kuropatkin. In 1906 the well-known journalist M.O. Menshikov wrote in *Novoe Vremia*: 'The [enemy in the] last terrible war… was armed with the most active participation of the Jews. In order to thrust Japan against Russia, it was necessary to arrange for Japan not only external loans, but also the most ardent sympathy [for Japan] in America and England. This sympathy, as has now been established beyond doubt, was artificially stirred up in the American press, which was almost completely in Jewish hands. In the course of a whole series of years an army of Jewish hacks has slandered Russia, poured an unbelievably dirty torrent of abuse on her, and stirred people up to hate and despise everything Russian. As a result public opinion, and not only in America, was confused. The huge reading world was pitifully deceived…' At the height of the war the Paris newspaper *Presse* noted: 'Japan

has not been waging war against Russia alone. She has a powerful ally – Jewry.'…"

This was not Schiff's only intervention in Russian affairs in this period. I.P. Yakoby writes that in August, 1905, during the peace negotiations at the end of the war, a delegation led by Schiff approached Russia's chief negotiator, Witte, "in order", as I.P. Yakoby writes, "to obtain a promise from him that equal rights would be given to the Jews in Russia. Witte received them kindly; he with them was zealous for the lot of Jewry. But he did not hold out any great hopes. Then Schiff declared in a poisonous and malicious manner: 'If the Tsar does not want to give his people [the Jews] the freedom they desire, then the revolution will establish a republic thanks to which these rights will be attained.'"

Undoubtedly the Jews' support for the revolution at home and for the Japanese abroad was an important factor in the Russian defeat. But ultimately the Russians had only themselves to blame. According to St. John of Kronstadt, the real cause of the defeat was the leaders' negligent attitude towards Orthodoxy.And the theft of Russia's greatest holy thing, the wonderworking Kazan icon of the Mother of God, on June 29, 1904 indicated that the Mother of God had withdrawn her protection from Russia. For "not in vain", wrote Archbishop Nicon (Rozhdestvensky), "has there long been the belief in the people that as long as this holy icon is intact, and stands guard between Christian Europe and the heterodox, pagan-Muslim world of Asia, we can be calm. But if she, our fervent Intercessor, leaves her place, then woes and misfortunes threaten us, and we shall remain defenceless…"

Although the war was a bloody failure, the Tsar courageously refused to allow the official record to whitewash anything. He said: "The work must be based exclusively on the bare facts... We have nothing to silence, since more blood has been shed than necessary.... Heroism is worthy to be noted on an equal footing with failures. It is, without exception, necessary to aim at recording the historic truth inviolably."

Although many experts still thought that Russia could win the war if she continued, she sued for peace. In September, 1905, at Portsmouth, U.S.A., thanks to the very tough negotiating stance of Tsar Nicholas, skilfully carried out by Witte, favourable terms were won for Russia. She did not have to pay an indemnity, and lost only Port Arthur and the south of Sakhalin. Nevertheless, the loss of prestige was great, and gave renewed encouragement to the revolutionaries.

During the war, writes Oldenburg, "the revolutionary newspaper *Liberation*, which was published abroad, counted up the forces of the

'liberation movement' and gave, with some exaggeration, the following reply to the question: 'What do we have?': 'The whole of the intelligentsia and part of the people; all the *zemstva*, the whole of the press, a part of the city Dumas, all the corporations (jurists, doctors, etc.)… The socialist parties have promised their support… The whole of Finland is with us… Oppressed Poland and the Jewish population languishing within the Pale of Settlement are for us.' But the same newspaper did not hide its fears: 'If the Russian armies defeat the Japanese… then freedom will be quietly strangled under the cries of "Hurrah!" and the tolling of the bells of the triumphant empire.'"

In the end, Russia lost because "a house that is divided against itself cannot stand" (Mark 3.25). Thus "at the end of 1904, on the eve of the preparation of a general attack against the Japanese army near Lyaodun, strikes began in the major Russian military factories and on the railways, which left the Russian army without ammunition and food and allowed the Japanese to take back the initiative. The first defeats of the Russian army elicited the genuine joy of the liberals and a flow of congratulations on this score to the emperor of Japan… With regard to the surrender to the Japanese of Port Arthur his Majesty Emperor Nicholas II organized a government judicial inquiry, since there were no military reasons for the capitulation…"

In spite of that, "the Russian army conducted its retreat in good order, and its losses in manpower turned out to be almost two times fewer than those of the Japanese… The experience of the war of 1904-1905 allowed Russia in the next three to four years to carry out a military reform and modernize her armaments, munitions and technical equipment in all sections of the army. In spite of colossal credits by the standards of those times from England and the USA, and the participation of Germany in the technical fitting out of the army and fleet, Japan was so exhausted by this military encounter that it was only fourteen years later, at the very end of the First World War, that she was able to re-establish her pre-war military potential and join the Entente."

41. ST. NICHOLAS OF JAPAN

The war with Japan caused particular problems for the Russian Orthodox Mission in Japan, headed by Archbishop Nicholas (Kasatkin). A peasant from Smolensk province, St. Nicholas first went to Japan in 1861. Encouraged to learn Japanese by St. Innocent, enlightener of Alaska, in 1870 he founded an astonishingly successful mission that brought tens of thousands of native Japanese to the faith and aroused the admiration of all, including the Japanese. In July, 1882 he presided over the first All-Japanese Orthodox Council. A delegation from Peking was also present, including several churchmen who were among the 222 Chinese Orthodox martyred during the Boxer Uprising in 1900.

Archbishop Nicholas made some interesting observations concerning the relationship between Orthodoxy and Buddhism. Here is a short excerpt from an article on the subject:

"The saint just as negatively reacted to the idea he heard of creating a hybrid of Christianity and Buddhism, pointing out the 'absurdity of such an endeavor, and the impossibility under any circumstances of comparing the truth of God's faith with human invention' (III, 363).

"St. Nicholas approved of the words of his visitors who 'had compared Christianity with Buddhism and found them to be polar opposites' (III, 804). The saint at times had to disprove the then popular opinion among Western and Russian intelligentsia that Christianity was constructed upon ideas borrowed from Buddhism. He describes his conversation with the wife of Admiral Schmidt. At her remark about the closeness of Buddhism's moral teaching with that of Christianity, St. Nicholas replied, 'There is indeed some resemblance to our religion in Buddhism's moral teaching; and what pagan religion does not have it? The moral teaching of pagans is drawn from the conscience, which they have not lost.' 'But they say that Christ's teachings were borrowed from Buddhism.' 'Well, this is what people say who know neither Buddhist nor Christian teachings well.' 'No—why shouldn't Christ borrow something from Buddhism if He liked it? He (Christ) was an intelligent man.' 'Christ was God and He spoke His teaching as a Divine command; Buddha, as well as everything in the world and the whole world itself, is nothing before Him', I interrupted her, in order to stop this outflow of refuse from the cesspool of a general's mind… So, the upper class in Russia is ignorant … in things related to faith" (II, 296)…

"From conversations with converts, St. Nicholas formed the opinion that Buddhism does not answer the needs of the soul that has a living religious

feeling. He cites the story of one family: 'Yuki and his wife were both believing Buddhists. Not having found in Buddhism a "personal" God, he lost his faith in it and was extremely glad to find God the Creator and His Providence in Christianity, about which he had learned by accident, having obtained a Bible. He began to pray to the Christian God, and his fervent prayer was even crowned by a miracle: his wife had been ill to the point that she was unable to stand up. He prayed fervently for her healing, and she at once rose up healthy, to everyone's amazement' (IV, 208). It is the fact that Christianity gives a person not simply an 'idea of God', but a living connection with Him, that in St. Nicholas's eyes distinguishes it in principle from Buddhism. This is explained by the saint's comment that, 'Buddhism in the religious sense is essentially empty, for what religion can there be without God? (III, 443).

"St. Nicholas spoke several times about Buddhist prayer: 'Their prayer is fruitless, because they pray to something that does not exist' (V, 571); 'Their prayer is useless and deserves pity, for a tree and a rock or some empty space, at which they direct their calls to the gods and buddhas, which do not exist, do not see or hear them, and cannot help' (II, 175)."

On the eve of the Russo-Japanese war, "alarmed by the possibility of war with their co-religionists, the Orthodox Japanese turned to their bishop. He replied that they, like all Japanese, were obliged by their oath to carry out their military duty, but to fight was not at all the same as to hate one's enemy, but meant to defend one's fatherland. The Saviour Himself bequeathed patriotism to us when He sorrowed over the lot of Jerusalem. The archpastor himself decided to stay in Japan with his flock, even if there was a war…

"It began in February 1904. Then Bishop Nicholas handed over all ecclesiastical affairs to the council of priests, and himself served his last liturgy before the war. At the end of the service in his farewell sermon to his flock he called on it to pray for victory for their fatherland, but he, as a subject of the Russian Emperor, could not take part in the common service; but he would be happy to see his flock carrying out their duty. In his encyclical of February 11, 1904, Bishop Nicholas blessed the Japanese to carry out their duty, not sparing their lives, but reminded them that our fatherland is the Church, where all Christians constitute one family; he told them to pray for the re-establishment of peace and asked for mercy to prisoners of war. After this he shut himself away and gave himself over to exploits of prayer…

"Nobody in Russia understood the hierarch of Japan as well as Emperor Nicholas II. At the end of the war the Tsar wrote to him: 'You have shown before all that the Orthodox Church of Christ is foreign to worldly dominion and every tribal hatred, and embraces all tribes and languages with her love.

In the difficult time of the war, when the weapons of battle destroy peaceful relations between peoples and rulers, you, in accordance with the command of Christ, did not leave the flock entrusted to you, and the grace of love and faith gave you strength to endure the fiery trial and amidst the hostility of war to keep the peace of faith and love in the Church created by your labours…'"

St. Nicholas made some penetrating remarks on the course of the war and its spiritual causes. Thus on July 19 / August 1, 1904 he wrote: "The Japanese are beating us, all the peoples hate us, it seems as if the Lord God has poured out His wrath upon us. And how could it be otherwise? Why should we be loved and pitied? Our nobility has been corrupted over the centuries by serfdom and has become debauched to the marrow of its bones. The simple people has been oppressed over the centuries by the same serfdom and has become ignorant and crude to the highest degree; the service class and the bureaucrats have lived through bribery and stealing from the State and now at all levels of service, wherever it is possible to steal, there is the most shameless and universal stealing from the State. The upper class is a collection of monkeys; they are imitators and worshippers, now of France, now England, now Germany and of every other thing that is foreign. The clergy, oppressed by poverty, can hardly repeat the catechism – are they capable of developing Christian ideals and sanctifying themselves and others through them?... And with all that we have the very highest opinion of ourselves: we only are true Christians, we only have real enlightenment, while there we see only darkness and corruption… No, it is not for nothing that the present woes have overwhelmed Russia – she herself has drawn them upon herself. Only work it, O Lord God, that this may be the punishing staff of Thy love! Do not allow, O Lord, that my poor Homeland should be destroyed to the end! Save and have pity!"

Again, on May 20 / June 2, 1905 he wrote: "Russia is not a naval power. God gave her land covering one sixth of the world and stretching without interruption across the continent, without any islands. And she could have taken possession of it peacefully, exploiting its wealth and converting it to the good of her people; she could have take care of the material and spiritual well-being of her citizens. But all this was not enough for the Russian government; it is expanding its possessions more and more; and by what means! Is it really a good thing to attempt to conquer Manchuria and take it from China?

"'We need a warm-water port.' Why? To give our sailors something to boast about? Well, let them now boast in the unheard-of shame of their defeat [at Tsushima]. It is obvious that God was not with us, because we destroyed His righteousness.

"'Russia has no outlet to the ocean.' What for? Do we have trade here? None at all. The fleet had done a good job defending a handful of Germans who are conducting their German trade here… All we needed were a few ships to catch those who are stealing from our fishermen, and a few fortresses on the coast; in the event of war these same fortresses would defend the ships and would not allow the enemy to take control of the coast.

"'Why do you need Korea?' I once asked Admiral Dubasov. 'It should be ours by natural right,' he replied. 'When a man stretches out his legs, he is chained down by what is on his legs; we are growing and stretching our legs. Korea is on our legs, we cannot stop stretching out to the sea and making Korea ours.' So that's what they did! They cut off our legs!

"And God is not defending His people because it has done unrighteousness. The God-Man wept over Judaea, but did not defend it from the Romans. I used to say to the Japanese: 'We will always be friends with you, because we cannot bump into each other: we are a continental power, you are a naval power; we can help each other, supplement each other, but there will never be a reason for enmity.' I always said this boldly right up to our taking Port Arthur from the Japanese after the Chinese-Japanese war. 'God, what have they done now!' were my first words and groan when I heard about this unclean act of the Russian government. Now we can see to what misfortune it has brought Russia.

"… It was not need for a fleet that created the Russian fleet, but vainglory; while lack of talent prevented us from arming it properly, which is why everything ended in dust. Will Russia at least now renounce the role of a great sea power that does not belong to her? Or will she continue in her blindness and try again to creat a fleet, exhausting her resources, which are very much needed for more vital, truly vital things, like the education of the people, the exploitation of her internal resources and such like? She will be unprecedentedly powerful if she firmly and clearly recognizes herself to be a continental power, but fragile and weak – like a weak hermaphrodite – if she again begins to see herself as also a great sea power which must therefore have a big fleet, which in such a case will always be the prey of her enemies and the source of shame for herself. Help her, O Lord, to become cleverer and more honourable!... My soul is in torment for my dear Fatherland, which its ruling class has made stupid and dishonourable…"

Archbishop Nicholas may have been a sharp critic of his Homeland, but his noble affirmation, in word and deed, of the primacy of faith over politics did not go unappreciated. After the war he was awarded the Order of St. Alexander Nevsky by the Tsar, and the Holy Synod raised him to the rank of

archbishop. His death in 1912 was covered by all the newspapers of Japan. His life witnessed vividly to the fact that Christianity, while supporting true patriotism, is a *universalist* religion which always places the universalist message of the Gospel above the interests of any individual State or nation.

42. THE PRESS AND THE LIBERALS

We have noted that one of the causes of the defeat of the Russians in the war with Japan was the defeatist attitude of the liberals in the rear, which was magnified by the diatribes of the largely Jewish-controlled press. Now the press had emerged as an important factor in international relations for the first time in the Crimean War, when reports in the British press of military incompetence and insanitary conditions in the hospitals, together with photographs from the battlefield, had had an important influence on public opinion, and thence on the government. It became even more important in the Balkan crises of the 1870s when reports of Turkish atrocities in *The Daily Telegraph* and *The Manchester Guardian* were an important help to Gladstone in his campaign to jolt Disraeli's government out of its pro-Turkish indifference. By the 1890s all the major powers had reason to fear the press. In Britain the press was largely uncensored; even in monarchical Germany and Russia it was beginning to flex its muscles…

Although there was a generally pro-government newspaper in Russia, *Novoe Vremia,* which was read by the Tsar, its circulation was much smaller than that of the liberal *Russkoe Slovo.* Christopher Clark writes that by 1913 "*Russkoe Slovo,* Moscow's best-selling daily paper, was selling up to 800,000 copies per day. Although censorship was still operating, the authorities permitted fairly free discussion of foreign affairs (as long as they did not directly criticize the Tsar or his ministers) and many of the most important dailies engaged retired diplomats to write on foreign policy. In the aftermath of the Bosnian crisis, moreover, Russian public opinion grew more assertive – especially on Balkan issues – and more anti-governmental…

"In January 1914, Sazonov and his [foreign] ministry were denounced for 'pusillanimity' by the Russian nationalist press…"

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"Already in the 70s," writes Solzhenitsyn, "the 'unbridledness of the Russian press' had been noted more than once by Dostoyevsky. In relation to the State it displayed itself even at the conference of March 8, 1881 under the just-crowned Alexander III, and more than once after that: the journalists behaved like self-willed representatives of society.

"The expression: 'Three hostile newspapers are more dangerous than 100,000 hostile soldiers' has been ascribed to Napoleon. This phrase became very applicable to the Russo-Japanese war. The Russian press was openly defeatist throughout the war, in each of its battles. And, still more important:

it did not hide its sympathy for terrorism and revolution…"

Writing in 1901, St. John of Kronstadt linked "the lying press" with the power of Jewry. The press "… has been gradually invading the sphere of life of recent centuries and is becoming a dominant factor in the historical acts of the peoples. They go wherever the press draws them. They are drawn to serve the Jews, for since the beginning of the 19th century the Jews have begun to take control of the press. This took place on the orders of the founder of the universal Jewish union. He taught it the way to get control of the peoples and kingdoms. The victory of Jewry is guaranteed by the fact that the apostates from Christianity see allies in those who are similar to them in their apostasy; but they are woefully wrong. The Jews can be allies only with themselves…"

On August 25, 1904 the Tsar made his first significant concession to the views of the newspaper publishers and their readership by appointing Prince P.S. Sviatopolk-Mirsky, a liberal conservative, as Minister of the Interior in place of the murdered Plehve. As Alexander Bokhanov writes, "the minister gave several interviews to the newspapers, met with representatives of liberal circles and popularized his political programme, whose main points were: religious tolerance, the broadening of local self-government, the provision of great rights to the press, a change in policy in relation to the border regions, an allowance of workers' meetings for the discussion of economic questions. These declarations produced a sensation.

"Political activists of a liberal persuasion were very sceptical about them. They were convinced that the time of the autocracy was drawing to an end, and did not want to bind themselves with any obligations to the 'departing authorities'. One of the most well-known activists among the liberals, Paul Nikolayevich Miliukov, wrote in the summer of 1904 on the pages of the illegal newspaper *Liberation*: 'We shall be patriots for ourselves and for a future Russia, we shall remain faithful to the old 'people's proverb' – 'Down with the autocracy!' This is also patriotic, and at the same time guarantees us freedom from the danger of being in the bad company of reactionaries.'

"At the very height of the 'Sviatopolk spring', at the end of September and beginning of October, 1904, a leading group of Russian liberals grouped around the newspaper *Liberation*, which had been published since 1902 under the editorship of P.B. Struve, first in Stuttgart, then in Paris, conducted a congress of opposition parties in Paris. Various liberal and radical unions took part in it. Of the most significant only RSDRP [the Russian Social Democrat Party] was absent. This meeting unanimously approved a resolution on the liquidation of the autocracy and replacing it with 'a free democratic structure on the basis of universal suffrage' and on the right of 'national self-determination of the peoples of Russia'.

"At the congress was present the flower of the Russian liberal intelligentsia, which later formed the core of the most powerful liberal party in Russia – the constitutional-democratic party ('the cadets'). These gentlemen, fighters for freedom and 'European rules' considered it appropriate to define common actions with the extreme tendencies and groups that had stained themselves with bloody murders, for example, the party of the social revolutionaries ('S-Rs'), which emerged in 1902 and placed terror at the head of the corner of its 'strategy and tactics'.

"Already after the revolution, when all the noble-hearted liberal word-mongers had been scattered by the crude reality of Russian life, some of them came to their senses and confessed their criminal lightmindedness. In the emigration at the beginning of the 1930s the well-known cadet V.A. Maklakov wrote about the notorious Paris congress: 'On the part of liberalism, this agreement was a union with the revolution that threatened it. The salvation of Russia was possible only through the reconciliation of the historical authority with liberalism, that is, the sincere transformation of the autocracy into a constitutional monarchy. By instead concluding this union with the revolution, the liberalism of *Liberation* lost this exit; it preferred to serve the triumph of the revolution.'

"Mirsky's proclaimed 'epoch of trust' very soon began to demonstrate its hopelessness. It turned out that it was easy to make promises, but very difficult to fulfil them. In particular, right in the centre of the discussions and debates was the old and painful question of the creation of a pan-Russian representative organ, it competency and the path to its formation. It immediately came up against the problem of the unassailability of the monarch's prerogatives. Prince N.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was convinced that the autocracy and representation were compatible, but many others in the ruling circles did not share this position. They feared that the creation of any unappointed, elected organ would inevitably generate confusion in the administration and would contribute to the paralysis of power, which the enemies of the throne and the dynasty would unfailingly use. At the end of 1904 there were more and more reasons for such fears.

"Passions fired up especially during and after the congress of zemstvo activists, which took place in Petersburg from November 7 to 9, 1904. The minister of the interior allowed the congress, but asked the participants to occupy themselves with 'practical questions of zemstvo life'. However, in the atmosphere of social tension and of the sharp politicization of the whole of public life, the practical realization of such a direction was impossible.

"The zemstvo deputies discussed some of their specific questions briefly,

but the centre of their attention was in the stream of general political problems. It was accepted that the convening of a 'national representation' was necessary, that a political amnesty should be introduced, that 'administrative arbitrariness' should be stopped, that the 'decrees on intensified guard' should be rescinded, that personal inviolability should be guaranteed, and that religious tolerance should be affirmed. Although those assembled left for the authorities the initiative in carrying out transformations and rejected the calls of some participants to support the demand for the convening of a Constituent Assembly, nevertheless the event that took place was unprecedented. For the first time subjects of the tsar, gathered together in the capital of the empire, did not petition the monarch on personal matters, but spoke out with demands of a political character.

"The most blatant was one very important demand-resolution, 'point ten', which declared that only a constitutional order, limiting autocratic power, could satisfy public opinion and give Russia 'peaceful development of state life'.

"This thesis elicited sharp objections from the moderate participants in the congress led by the well-known liberal zemstvo activist D.N. Shipov, who categorically declared that he did not share the constitutionalist point of view. In his lengthy speech he defended the old Slavophile thesis: 'The people has its opinions, the tsar makes the decisions', and did not allow any written agreements and guarantees between the authorities and the people, considering that their relations were built, not on juridical formal principles, but on unassailable moral principles. This reasoning was not influential, and during the voting the majority cast their votes for a constitution.

"The decisions of the zemstvo congress aroused considerable interest and became the subject of lively discussion in the press and in private gatherings. At first it was supposed that the deputation of zemstvo activists would be received by the Interior minister and the Tsar, which would be seen as a turning of the authorities towards constitutionalism. The conservative traditionalists were angry. Great-Prince Sergius Alexandrovich wrote in his diary on November 10: 'I heard about the details of the zemstvo congress in St. Petersburg: they voted for a constitution!! A deputation of zemstvo activists has been received by Mirsky, and will be received by the Tsar!! (It was not – A.B.) Unhappy man,' and he added: 'It sometimes seems to me that I'm going out of my mind.'

"The authorities were shocked: it could not satisfy such extreme demands, since this de facto meant the self-liquidation of the historical power. But they could not leave things as they were before. At the beginning of December 1904 meetings of high officials of the empire took place in Tsarskoe Selo, at

which urgent measures to transform the inner structure were discussed.

"At the centre of the discussions was a programme put forward by the Interior minister. The special attention of the participants was drawn to the point about elected representatives in the State Council (until then all members had been appointed personally by the monarch). The majority of those assembled expressed themselves against this. The over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod, C.P. Pobedonostsev, entreated the tsar in the name of God not to limit the autocracy, and this position was supported by the minister of finances V.N. Kokovtsov, the president of the Committee of ministers, S.Yu. Witte and most of the others. The tsar wavered at the beginning, but soon unambiguously spoke for keeping the authority inviolable.

"At the end of the Tsarskoe Selo meetings, a decree of the Senate was issued containing resolutions on the broadening of local self-government, on reviewing resolutions on the press and confirming the necessity of establishing religious toleration. The point about elected representatives was missing. But the liberals hoped that the elective principle would be specified there. However, the tsar considered that it was not yet time for sharp changes…"

The press, which had done so much to stir up this constitutionalist mania, continued unchecked in 1905. Solzhenitsyn writes that it "was seen during the Duma period as, in the words of Witte, mainly 'Jewish' or 'half-Jewish': more precisely, with a predominance of leftist or radical Jews in the key correspondent and editors' posts. In November, 1905 D.I. Pikhno, the editor of the Russian national newspaper *Kievlianin*, who had already been in this post for 25 years and studied the Russian press, wrote: 'Jewry… has placed huge stakes on the card of the Russian revolution… The serious part of Russian society had understood that at such moments the press is a force, but it did not have this power – it was in the hands of its opponents, who spoke in its name throughout Russia and forced themselves to be read, because there were no other publications, and you can't create them in one day… and [society] was lost in the multitude of lies in which it could not find its way.'

"L. Tikhomirov saw nothing national in this, but in 1910 he made the following comments on the character of the Russian press: 'Tearing on the nerves… One-sidedness… They don't want decency, gentlemanliness… They have no ideal, and have no understanding of it.' And the public brought up by this press 'demands glibness and hooliganism, it cannot value knowledge, and does not notice ignorance'.

"And, from completely the opposite political extreme, a Bolshevik publicist

[M. Lemke] expressed himself as follows on the character of this press: 'In our post-reformation era ideas have become cheap, while information, sensation and unabashed authoritarian ignorance fill the press.'

"Speaking, more specifically, about culture, Andrew Bely complained in 1909, although he was by no means a rightist or 'chauvinist': 'The leaders of national culture turn out to be people who are foreign to this culture… Look at the lists of those working on the newspapers and journals of Russia: who are the musical and literary critics of these journals? You will see almost exclusively Jewish names: among these critics there are some talented and acute people, there are some among them who understand the tasks of a national culture, perhaps, more profoundly than the Russians: but they are exceptions. The general mass of Jewish critics are completely foreign to Russian art. They write in an Esperanto jargon and terrorize every attempt to deepen and enrich the Russian language.'

"In those same years the far-sighted Zionists Vl. Zhabotinsky complained about the 'leading newspapers sustained on Jewish money and filled with Jewish workers' and warned: 'When the Jews hurled themselves en masse to create Russian politics, we foretold them that nothing good would come out of it, neither for Russian politics, nor for Jewish.'

"The Russian press played a decisive role in the pre-revolutionary Cadet-revolutionary storming of the government: its mood was powerfully picked up and expressed by Duma deputy A.I. Shingarev: 'Let this power sink! We will not cast *this* power even a bit of rope!' It is appropriate to mention here that the First Duma stood up in memory of the victims of the Belostok pogrom (not agreeing… that this was an armed battle between anarchists and soldiers); the Second Duma – in honour of the murdered terrorist Iollos. But when Purishkevich suggested standing in honour of those killed at their posts as policemen and soldiers, he was forbidden to speak and excluded from the session: at that time it seemed unthinkable to the enflamed parliamentarians to sympathize with those who kept simple order in the State, which was necessary for all of them, and for a generally quiet life.

"A member of the Union of [Jewish] Complete Equality, A. Kulisher, drew the truthful conclusion – but late, looking back at the past in the émigré *Jewish Tribune* in 1923: 'In Russian-Jewish society before the revolution there really were people and whole groups whose activity can be characterized precisely as… the absence of a feeling of responsibility for the turmoil in the minds of Russian Jewry… the spreading of an indefinite and light-minded 'revolutionism'… The whole essence of their politics consisted in being more leftist than anyone else. Always remaining in the role of irresponsible critics, never going to the end, they saw their purpose in saying: 'Not enough!'…

These people were 'democrats'… But there were also democrats who called themselves 'The Jewish *Democratic* Group' who attached this adjective to every unsuitable noun, composing an intolerable Talmud of democratism… They created around themselves an irresponsible mood of groundless maximalism, with no precise limit to their demands. This mood manifested itself with destructive consequences in the revolution.' The destructiveness proceeding from this press was indeed one of the weakest, most vulnerable points in the Russian State by 1914 and 1917…"

Indeed, the stream of slander turned out by the Jewish-controlled press against the Tsar (and especially the Tsarina) was one of the major causes of the revolution… In the role of the press, as in many other ways, we see how early-twentieth century Russia was a type - a microcosm, as it were - of the problems of modern civilization as a whole… No ruler now, however powerful or autocratic, could afford to ignore the opinions, however misguided, of "the common man" – or, more commonly, of that relatively small group of newspaper owners who presumed to speak in his name…

43. BLOODY SUNDAY

"By 1902-3," writes Dominic Lieven, "rumblings of revolution, or at least of fundamental constitutional change, were in the air. Not everyone heard them. Even in April 1904, three months before his assassination, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Vyacheslav Plehve, did not believe in 'the closeness of danger' to the regime. Plehve's optimism was partly based on the belief that 'in the event of things going to extremes, the government will find support in the peasantry and urban lower-middle class'. In addition he recalled having survived earlier times of crisis and panic. 'I have lived through more than one moment like the one we are living through now,' he commented. 'After the First of March [1881: the day Alexander II was assassinated] Count Loris-Melikov said to Plehve on the day after Alexander III rejected Alexander II's constitution that "the Tsar will be killed and you and I will be hanged on a gallows". Nothing happened though.'

"Other senior officials were less optimistic, often understanding better than Plehve that opposition to the government was by now much broader and deeper than had been the case a quarter of a century before. Kireev himself commented, as early as October 1900, that 'I have seen a lot of intelligent people recently and in one voice, some with joy… others with horror, they all say that the present system of government has outlived its era and we are heading towards a constitution.' Even the very conservative Konstantin Pobedonostsev agreed on this. A year later Kireev stated that in upper-class and senior bureaucratic circles 'in the eyes of the great majority a constitutional order is the only salvation'. He himself believed, however, that 'it is precisely this [constitutional order] which will in fact destroy us'. Like Alexander Polovtsov his eyes were turned towards the peasant masses, with their huge numbers and their potential for anarchy and socialism. 'For the *time being* the peasants are still firm, still untouched. They are, as before, monarchists. But anyone can throw them into a muddle.'

"Those with the greatest interest in throwing the masses 'into a muddle' were of course the revolutionary socialist parties. Russian revolutionary socialism in the early twentieth century was divided into two currents, one Marxist, the other not. The former strand was represented by the Social Democrats, who in 1903 split into two factions, Menshevik and Bolshevik. The non-Marxist strand comprised the Socialist Revolutionary Party, formally constituted only in 1901, but deriving its ideas, traditions and older cadres from the nineteenth-century Russian socialist movement. In terms of ideas, the greatest distinction between the two was that the Marxists believed that the urban workers would spearhead the socialist revolution, which could only occur after capitalism had fully developed. The Socialist Revolutionary Party, on the other hand, claimed that a coalition of peasants, workers and poorer

members of the intelligentsia and lower-middle class would achieve the socialist revolution, which could come immediately if the revolutionary parties pursued the proper tactics and exploited their opportunities.

"Unlike the Social Democrats, the Socialist Revolutionaries [called SRs] carried out a campaign of terror against leading officials as part of their strategy, killing three ministers between 1901 and 1904 alone and in the process sowing a good deal of alarm and confusion in the government. Partly for this reason the security police tended to regard the Socialist Revolutionaries as a more immediate and dangerous threat than the Social Democrats. The evaluation was not the product of mere panic or short-sightedness. The Marxists' dogmatism and their obsession with the working class seemed to make them unlikely leaders of a successful revolution in a still overwhelmingly peasant country in which capitalism was only beginning to take root. Moreover, the fact that the majority of Social Democratic leaders were non-Russians, and a great number were Jews, made it seem less likely than ever that they would be able to compete with the Socialist Revolutionaries for the support of the Russian masses. Events were in part to prove the police right. When the monarchy fell in 1917 it was indeed the Socialist Revolutionaries who enjoyed by far the most popularity among the masses, not only in the countryside but also generally in the cities. Russia's socialist future should have lain in their hands. The combination of their own ineptitude, Lenin's intelligence and ruthlessness, and the specific conditions of wartime Russia were to deprive the Socialist Revolutionaries of the spoils of victory…"

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Russian educated society now took a decisive turn to the left. "The whole of Russian educated society, with very few exceptions, was in a state of sharp, irreconcilable, blind opposition to the authorities. It was in these years that the short, categorical and martial phrase 'Down with the autocracy!' was put forward and became a popular phrase…"

On September 17, 1904 representatives of the Union of Liberation met secretly in Paris with SRs and Polish and Finnish nationalists to create a united front against the autocracy.

In July, 1904 Plehve was assassinated. Under pressure from his mother, the Dowager Empress, the Tsar now chose Prince Peter Sviatopolk-Mirsky to take his place as Interior Minister. However, Sviatopolk-Mirsky was a liberal who opposed his predecessor's policies, was strongly opposed by the conservative officials in his ministry, and did not in any case want the job.

Lieven writes: "Disillusionment soon set in on both sides. Svyatopolk-Mirsky spoke in eloquent but rather nebulous terms to the press about a new era of trust and reconciliation between government and society, in the process unleashing a torrent of hopes about fundamental political change. In early October the Grand Duke Constantine, an intelligent and decent cousin of the Emperor, wrote in his diary that the new minister had come to dinner. 'He makes a good impression by his broad views. It frightens me that everyone – society and the press – are very carried away with him. How can disenchantment not follow, since in the nature of thing it will be impossible for him to put into effect much of what he would like to do? ' Very soon Svyatopolk-Mirsky found himself under increasing pressure from a growing liberal movement which wanted to go much further than the minister desired or the Tsar would allow. Paul Benckendorff commented that Svyatopolk-Mirsky 'is very astonished by what is going on' and was bewildered by the forces he had unleashed. Public opinion was getting more and more excited but the minister, bereft of firm ideas, had no hope of steering it. Conservatives, led by Grand Duke Serge, sought to persuade Nicholas II to stop Svyatopolk-Mirsky's reforms, warning him that otherwise the regime was doomed. The Minister of Internal Affairs, on the contrary, told the Tsar that 'if you don't carry out liberal reforms and don't satisfy the completely natural wishes of everyone then change will come in the form of revolution.'

"The denouement came in December 1904 when the Emperor presided over a conference of ministers, grand duke and other top officials to discuss Prince Svyatopolk-Mirsky's ten-point programme of reforms. The latter included not only promises of civil rights but also a proposal that elected representatives of society participate in discussing legislation and central government policy. Under strong pressure from the Grand Duke Serge and warned by Witte that Svyatopolk-Mirsky's proposal was a long step towards a constitution, Nicholas rejected the key point of his minister's proposal. The Emperor commented that 'I will never agree to a representative form of government because I consider it harmful to the people whom God has entrusted to me.' What remained of Svyatopolk-Mirsky's programme after the conference, namely some rather vague promises of civil rights, would not satisfy society…

"Underlying the mutual recriminations between Nicholas II and Svyatopolk-Mirsky there was a deeper problem. In his classic study of the origins of the French Revolution Alexis de Tocqueville commented that the most dangerous moment for a repressive regime was when it began to reform itself. Under a resolute and united authoritarian government, opposition was deterred by the knowledge that it would be repressed without hesitation or mercy. Once the government began to allow greater leeway to society, however, difficulties mounted. Brave spirits were tempted to see how far

freedom could be pushed. For the government, finding the right mix of repression and concession required much more skill and judgement than simply sticking to an unwavering policy of coercion. As reforms were introduced and society began to emancipate itself from the regime's control, splits almost invariably occurred within the government between those who argued that change was coming too rapidly and others who argued that change was not coming fast enough. Both sides tended to believe that their opponents' line threatened political stability and the regime's survival. Divisions within the government led to uncoordinated and tentative actions which themselves encouraged the regime's opponents. Prince V.P. Meshchersky, the very conservative editor of *Grazhdanin*, made most of these points in an editorial which appeared shortly after Svyatopolk-Mirsky announced the onset of an era of trust between government and society. Meshchersky added that in Russia at present ordered reform would be particularly difficult since the government's prestige was low, many of its enemies were irreconcilable, and reforms could easily be interpreted as concessions born of fear and weakness. Meshchersky was a reactionary, a homosexual, a past-master at Petersburg intrigue and a well-known unofficial adviser to both Alexander III and Nicholas II. For all these reasons he was widely hated by his contemporaries and has enjoyed a bad press with historians. But the Prince was not stupid and on this occasion, as on many others, his political analysis was quite shrewd…"

At the same time, the government was beginning to lose control of the workers' union movement in St. Petersburg. Under Plehve, the movement had been led by a police agent, Sergei Zubatov, and then by a priest, George Gapon. As Lieven writes, "Zubatov, an intelligent and professional police chief, had understood that police trade union had to be closely and carefully supervised otherwise they could result in a labour movement organized by the government being captured by its opponents and escaping from the regime's control. By 1904 the Petersburg police leadership was much less careful and professional than Zubatov had been. Even while Plehve was still alive, Gapon was being converted to socialism by the lieutenants whom he was supposedly using on the government's behalf to create a loyal workers' movement. 'By March 1904 he conspiratorially revealed a "plan" to his group, a radical plan aiming at civil liberties, a responsible ministry, the eight-hour day, unions, universal education, and sweeping land reforms, a plan they [his supposed lieutenants] had put in his mind in the first place.' Throughout 1904 the police regarded Gapon as loyal and left him unsupervised, though by the autumn the threat represented by his movement should have been clear…"

On December 20, 1904, four workers belonging to Gapon's Assembly of Russian Factory and Plant Workers were dismissed by the management of the Putilov Factory, St. Petersburg's largest. By January 8 120,000 workers were

on strike; the city was without electricity and newspapers. On January 9, Gapon led a demonstration of some tens of thousands of workers with a petition for the Tsar towards the Winter Palace. They were forbidden to go further, but when some did, pushed from behind, the troops opened fire, killing perhaps 200 and injuring 800. This tragic event was used by the *intelligenty* and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine faith in the Tsar among the masses.

The first myth that needs to be dispelled is that the Tsar was heartless towards the condition of the workers. Of course, conditions for workers in Russia, as in every other industrialized country of the time, were harsh. But it needs to be borne in mind, as Nicholas Kazantsev writes, that "*before* 'Bloody Sunday' special laws had been issued to secure the safety of workers in mining and factory industries, on the railways and in enterprises that were dangerous for their life and health, as for example in munitions factories, etc.

"Child labour until the age of 12 was forbidden, while adolescents and women could not be employed in factory work between 9 in the evening and 5 in the morning. Fines deducted from pay packets could not exceed one third of the packet, moreover every fine had to be confirmed by the factory inspector. Money from fines went into a special fund designed to satisfy the needs of the workers themselves.

"In 1903 workers' wardens elected by the factory workers on the corresponding sections were introduced. Moreover, in Tsarist Russia – again, *before* 'Bloody Sunday' - it was possible to resort to strikes. In factories controlled by the Labour Inspectorate there were 68 strikes in 1893, 118 in 1896, 145 in 1897, 189 in 1899 and 125 in 1900. While in 1912 social insurance was established.

"At that time the emperor's social legislation was undoubtedly the most progressive in the world. This caused Taft, the president of the United States at the time to declare publicly two years before the First World War in the presence of some high-ranking Russians: 'Your Emperor has created such a perfect workers' legislation as not one democratic state can boast of.'"

However, the demonstration was not really about workers' conditions. In the petition composed by Gapon, the following was demanded, among other things: an amnesty for political prisoners, the convening of a Constituent Assembly, a government responsible to the people, the separation of the Church and State, a progressive income tax, the abolition of redemption payments from the peasants, an end to the war, the creation of elected trade unions and the abolition of the factory inspectorate.

"From this it was evident," writes Kazantsev, "that Gapon was completely led by the revolutionaries. But the masses went behind the *former* Gapon, who had organized his workers' movement under the protection of the over-procurator of the Synod, Pobedonostsev.

"They went towards the Tsar with by no means a peaceful request, as D. Zubov affirms, but with an ultimatum. Gapon went round the crowd of workers and said everywhere: 'If the Tsar refuses us, then we have no Tsar.' The crowd, as if enthralled, repeated his words and cried out: 'We shall die!'… Fine 'monarchical sentiments'!…

"N. Varnashev, the closest fellow-struggler of the provocateur, tells us that Gapon was warning those close to him: 'I will have two flags with me – a white and a red; flying the white flag will mean that the tsar accepts our demands, but flying the red will be a signal for revolutionary actions'... While the active participant in Gapon's organization, I. Pavlov, cites the boastful declaration of Gapon: 'We shall disarm the whole of the Petersburg police in ten minutes'... That's a 'Workers' movement free of politics' for you!..."

"Mirsky and the police panicked. Instead of using Cossacks, whose charges were terrifying and whips painful but rarely fatal, the garrison's infantry under Uncle Vladimir, untrained for crowd control." But figures of those killed have been exaggerated: probably no more than a few hundreds were killed on Bloody Sunday. The Tsar sacked the commander responsible for disobeying orders. Then, on January 11, he "received a deputation of workers who repented to him that they had allowed themselves to be drawn into an anti-government provocation. His Majesty mercifully forgave them all and gave to each family of those who suffered an allowance equivalent to half a year's pay of a highly qualified worker. The police measures of the governments of the western countries, and especially the USA, at the beginning of the 20th century, to break up strikes and demonstrations led to far larger numbers of victims. It is sufficient to recall the shooting of the First of May strikers in Chicago and other cities in America, but democratically-inclined journalists prefer to keep silent about these facts."

"The information on the events of January 9, 1905 in St. Petersburg is filled with lies and unfounded attacks on his August Majesty. The organizers of the demonstration to the Winter Palace headed by the defrocked priest George Gapon well knew that the tsar was not in St. Petersburg, but in his residence in Tsarkoe Selo and was not intending to go to the capital. The city authorities issued a ban on the 200,000-strong crowd of demonstrators going into the centre of the city and stopped all eleven columns at the places where they were assembling. The opposition of the demonstrators and soldiers soon turned to gunfire from the crowd. The first victims turned out to be soldiers.

A part of the armed force returned fire on the provocateurs…"

According to Yuri Proshchaev and Theodore Gaida, "The main perpetrator was the tsar's uncle, Grand Duke Vladimir Alexandrovich, the commander of the St. Petersburg military district, who said he would enforce order at any cost; and he really did not care what the cost was for keeping order."

In a long letter to her sister, Princess Victoria of Battenburg (27 January, 1905), the Tsarina complained of the lack of "real" men whom the Tsar could rely on for support. She blamed Sviatopolk-Mirsky for introducing liberal reforms too quickly, without preparing the ground. She did not blame the people, who were deceived by their leaders, but blamed the high society of Petersburg, that "rotten" city which did not represent the true Russia. Such complaints would become more common in later years…

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In the febrile atmosphere that followed Bloody Sunday, on February 4, Grand Duke Sergius Alexandrovich, uncle of the Tsar, former governor of Moscow and one of the foremost pillars of the regime, was killed by a bomb that exploded outside the palace that he and his wife, Grand Duchess Elizabeth, the sister of the Tsaritsa, inhabited in the Kremlin. At that moment the grand duchess was leaving for her workshops. Alarmed by the sound of an exploding bomb nearby, she hurried toward the place and saw a soldier stretching his military overcoat over the maimed body of her husband. The soldier tried to hide the horrible sight from the eyes of the unfortunate wife. But the grand duchess dropped to her knees, on the street, and put her arms out trying to embrace the torn remains of her husband. The bomb had shattered his body to such an extent that fingers of the great prince were found, still in their gloves, on the roof of the neighbouring building.

The lofty spirit in which the Grand Duchess took the tragedy astounded everyone; she had the moral strength even to visit in prison her husband's assassin, Kaliayev, hoping to soften his heart with her Christian forgiveness.

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"My attempt was unsuccessful, but, who knows, perhaps at the last minute he will understand his sin and repent."

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On the memorial cross erected upon the site of her husband's death, the grand-duchess inscribed the Gospel words: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do..." After some years she became a nun and founded the monastery of Saints Mary and Martha in Moscow. The transformation of this scion of royalty and renowned beauty into a strict ascetic astounded and intrigued high society…

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Other consequences of Bloody Sunday protest meetings throughout the country, strikes in Riga, Warsaw and Odessa (where the crew of the battleship *Potemkin* joined the strikers) and the closing down of all institutions of higher learning.

On February 18 the tsar invited his subjects to submit suggestions "on matters concerning the improvement of the state and the nation's well-being", and issued a rescript to the new interior minister, Alexandr Bulygin, telling him that the tsar had decided "to involve the worthiest men, endowed with the nation's confidence and elected by the people, in the preliminary working out and evaluation of legislative bills". This was a project for a parliament in all but name; and when the *zemtsy* held their second congress in Moscow in April they demanded a Constituent Assembly. All kinds of professional unions were formed, all making similar demands. On May 8 a congress of fourteen unions organized by the Union of Liberation in Moscow joined to form a Union of Unions under the chairmanship of Paul Miliukov.

Russian educated society now took a decisive turn to the left. "The whole of Russian educated society, with very few exceptions, was in a state of sharp, irreconcilable, blind opposition to the authorities. It was in these years that the short, categorical and martial phrase 'Down with the autocracy!' was put forward and became a popular phrase…"

Moreover, under the liberal interior minister, Sviatopolk-Mirsky, the

government were beginning to lose control of the workers' union movement in St. Petersburg.

In 1900-01 the Ministry of the Interior, supported by the Governor-General of Moscow, Great Duke Sergei Alexandrovich Romanov, the Tsar's uncle, had sponsored a scheme whereby a monarchist official of the ministry, Sergei Zubatov, created workers' trade unions that would give expression to workers' complaints against their employers while remaining loyal to the Tsar and without turning to revolutionary activity. At first highly successful, the movement fell into disfavour after the Odessa general strike of 1903, and revolutionaries were elected to the leadership of the unions in St. Petersburg. Zubatov was dismissed, being replaced by a priest, Father George Gapon.

Now, as Lieven writes, "Zubatov, an intelligent and professional police chief, had understood that police trade union had to be closely and carefully supervised otherwise they could result in a labour movement organized by the government being captured by its opponents and escaping from the regime's control. By 1904 the Petersburg police leadership was much less careful and professional than Zubatov had been. Even while Plehve was still alive, Gapon was being converted to socialism by the lieutenants whom he was supposedly using on the government's behalf to create a loyal workers' movement. 'By March 1904 he conspiratorially revealed a "plan" to his group, a radical plan aiming at civil liberties, a responsible ministry, the eight-hour day, unions, universal education, and sweeping land reforms, a plan they [his supposed lieutenants] had put in his mind in the first place.' Throughout 1904 the police regarded Gapon as loyal and left him unsupervised, though by the autumn the threat represented by his movement should have been clear…"

On January [9/]22, 1905 some hundreds of demonstrating workers led by Gapon were killed by tsarist troops in St. Petersburg - a tragic event that was used by the *intelligenty* and revolutionaries as an excuse to undermine faith in the Tsar among the masses.

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intrigued high society…

44. TOWARDS THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF SYMPHONY

The Tsar was deeply interested in the project of the convening of a Church Council for the first time since 1682 that would reform Church-State relations and restore the patriarchate that had been abolished by Peter the Great. He had even suggested, shortly after the birth of the Tsarevich, and probably on December 17, 1904, his own candidature to the post of patriarch!

According to the account of Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky), "the senior hierarchs, including myself, were summoned to his Majesty. At that time, in accordance with the will of the Tsar, preparatory work was being conducted for the convening of a Council at which the restoration of the Patriarchate in Russia was to take place. And his Majesty, following the course of the matter, wanted to see us. When we assembled in the palace, the Tsar asked us whether we had chosen a candidate. We glanced at each other and were silent. Each of us was probably thinking about himself as the most fitting Patriarch. After quite a long pause we replied: 'No, your Majesty.' A short period ensued; the Tsar again summoned us to himself, and put the same question to us. In our embarrassment we were forced, as before, to give a negative answer. Then the Tsar, after looking at us in silence, fell into thought. Some moments passed. The Tsar again began to speak: 'If you have not found a candidate, then I have someone in mind.' We all listened attentively, waiting to see which one of us the Tsar would point to. But what was our amazement when the Tsar declared to us: 'I myself am a candidate'. Stunned, we could not even find anything to say in reply. And the Tsar continued: 'The heir to the throne has been born. When he has grown up a little, Great Prince Michael Alexandrovich will become the regent. The Empress has agreed to go into a monastery. And I will be tonsured.'"

The process that led to this discussion had begun a little earlier, in November, 1904, when a report sponsored by the Minister of the Interior Prince P.D. Sviatopolk-Mirsky was completed envisaging important changes in a liberal direction in both Church and State. This led to the convening of an important conference on December 2 that included all the government ministers and four of the Tsar's uncles. An *ukaz* called "On Plans for the Perfecting of State Order" was signed on December 12.

The sixth point of this *ukaz* spoke of the sovereign's unbending desire to grant tolerance to schismatics and non-Orthodox confessions in the empire. The question this immediately raised was: how would this affect the interests of the dominant confession of the empire, the Orthodox Church? In order to answer this question, a note entitled "On the Contemporary Situation of the Orthodox Church" was composed by professors of the theological academies in the capital for the president of the council of ministers, Count Witte.

Sergei Firsov writes: "The note said that while externally free and protected by the State, the Orthodox Church was weighed down by heavy chains. The expulsion of the principle of *sobornost'* from Church life had led to a change in her spirit. The main cause of the disorders was recognized to be Peter's Church reform, as a result of which the Church's administration had turned into one of the 'numerous wheels of the complex machine of State'. The secular bureaucratic element was called a constant barrier between the Church and the people, as also between the Church and the State, while the only way to excite life from the dead was to return to the former, canonical norms of administration.

"Witte also subjected the contemporary situation of the Orthodox parish to sharp criticism; 'only the name remained' from it. The reasons for the fall of the parish were attributed by the authors of the note to the development of State centralization and the intensification of serfdom in Russia in the 18th and the beginning of the 19th centuries; the imposition of police duties on the clergy, as a consequence of which it was separated from its flock; the caste alienation of the clergy, and the payments it demanded for the carrying out of needs. But the autonomous re-establishment of small ecclesiastical units, which is what the parishes were, would not attain its aim if a general reform of the Church administration were not carried out: the parishes had to be linked by spiritual communion and pour into the community of the diocese, while 'diocesan assemblies' having Local Councils as their model should be convened periodically in parallel with the parish meetings.

"Later the note touched on the problem of the alienation from the Church of a significant part of the intelligentsia. Only the Church herself could resolve this problem and overcome the 'spiritual schism'. The problem of the theological school was also raised; it was declared to be a task of the whole State, 'for the degree of the influence of religion on the people depends completely on its organization'. The union of Church and State was wholeheartedly approved, while the 'self-governing activity' of the ecclesiastical and state organism, in the opinion of the authors, had to achieve the equilibrium destroyed by Peter the Great. With this aim it was necessary to convene a Local Council in which both white clergy and laity would participate. 'In view of the present undeniable signs of a certain inner shaking both of society and of the masses of the people," pointed out Witte, 'it would be dangerous to wait. Religion constitutes the main foundation of the popular spirit, and through it the Russian land has stood and been strong up to now.'

"And so in S.Yu. Witte's note the question was posed not about particular changes, but about a general ecclesiastical reform, which would lead to a strengthening of the independence of the Orthodox Church and would

sharply reduce the privileges of the over-procurator's authority. After all, it was a secret to nobody that in speaking about 'dry bureaucratic principles', the president of the Committee of Ministers had in mind the rules that found their completed expression in the activity of the department of the Orthodox confession.

"It was at about the same time, in February, that another note appeared expressing the opinion of the capital's Metropolitan Anthony: 'Questions relating to desirable transformations in the position of our Orthodox Church'. Vladyka reviewed concrete questions of the reform of the ecclesiastical administration that demanded a very speedy resolution. Referring to the discussions on religious toleration that had taken place in the Committee of Ministers, he noted: the authorities are opening to those who have separated from the Orthodox Church (the Old Ritualists, sectarians and others) 'a definite position in the State' without touching their inner church life, at the same time that the 'ruling' Church is deprived of such freedom. Citing the *Popovtsi* Old Ritualists who had accepted 'the Austrian hierarchs' as an example, Metropolitan Anthony warned: 'The danger may occur that this community will be turned into the people's Church while the Orthodox Church will remain only the State Church'.

"In pointing to the Church's position within the State, Vladyka placed before the authorities a question of principle: had not the moment come to weaken the control of the secular authorities over the life of the Church? Other questions followed logically from that: should not the Church be given a greater freedom in the administration of her internal affairs? Should Orthodox priests also have the right to be permanent members of social-state institutions having their place in the parishes? After this it was natural to pose the further question on the desirability of providing the Church hierarchy with the right to participate in the sessions of the State Council, the Committee of Ministers and other higher state institutions with the right to vote in them.

"The note undoubtedly touched on the privileges of the over-procurator of the Most Holy Synod. After all, if the desires expressed by the metropolitan were to be satisfied, the Orthodox episcopate would receive the possibility of independently, with the mediation of the State, influencing legislative proposals touching the Church, that is, it would have the right of a political voice in the empire. It is understandable that K.P. Pobedonostsev could not welcome such self-will, the more so in that, besides questions on the position of the Orthodox Church in Russia, the metropolitan gave reasons for the need to review the structure of the Church and some aspects of the Church's administration, and spoke about the particular importance of recognizing the parish as a legal person and on the desirability of reviewing the laws that

regulated the right of the Church to own, acquire and use property… "

This debate highlighted two paradoxes within the present position of religion in the Russian empire, paradoxes that could be removed only *simultaneously* or not at all. The first paradox was that the 44th and 45th articles of the *Basic Laws* of the Empire guaranteed freedom of religion - **but** the Emperor had to be Orthodox and was obliged both to watch over the purity of the Orthodox Faith and to protect the Orthodox population of the empire from threats presented by schisms and heresies. And the second paradox was that the Orthodox Church was the dominant confession of the empire - **but**, since it was also a department of State, it was less, rather than more free in relation to the State than the other confessions. Increasing freedom of religion in the sense, not simply of allowing freedom to practise religious rites (which already existed), but of creating real *equality* between the religions from the point of view of the State (which did not yet exist) would have the effect of abolishing the first paradox – but only by removing the Emperor's role as guardian of the Orthodox faith and substantially increasing the threat to Orthodoxy from certain confessions in certain regions (for example, Catholicism in the west). This could be compensated for, in the view of the hierarchs, only by abolishing the second paradox at the same time – that is, by giving the Church a free hand to defend herself from the competition of other confessions without interference from the State.

Pobedonostsev suspected that Witte and Metropolitan Anthony were in league against him, and mounted a vigorous campaign to stop the projected reforms, defending the Petrine system. On March 13 he succeeded in persuading the emperor to remove the question of Church reforms from the competence of the Conferences of Ministers and Heads of State Departments and place it before the Holy Synod. However, this was only a seeming victory: the Holy Synod was no less in favour of the reforms than was Witte and the State. On March 17 the Synod recognized the necessity of reviewing the present situation of the Church *vis-á-vis* the State "in view of the changed situation of the heterodox confessions, the so-called Old Ritualists and sectarians, and transform the Church's administration". The restoration of the patriarchate was deemed desirable "for the sake of the honour of the Russian State", and it was suggested that a Local Council be convened in Moscow composed of the diocesan bishops and their representatives. On March 22 the seven members of the Synod signed an appeal to the Tsar to convene a Council "at the appropriate time" in Moscow, at which a patriarch would be elected and a series of major questions of Church life would be discussed.

However, as Oldenburg writes, "protests against this plan came not only from those close to the over-procurator, but also from eminent theologians, convinced supporters of the restoration of parish self-government. 'The

Church must be regenerated. But this regeneration must be conducted in the correct way, without repeating the self-willed methods of action of 1721 [i.e. of Peter the Great's *Spiritual Regulation*],' wrote M.A. Novoselov. Criticizing the Synod, he added: 'The haste is truly striking. It recalls the spectacle of the so-called St. Vitus' dance rather than a serious discussion of a holy and great work!'"

Once again, on March 31, Pobedonostsev succeeded in persuading the Tsar to put off the Synod's project, and to postpone giving Metropolitan Anthony an audience "for a certain time". As the Tsar wrote on the Synod's appeal: "I admit the impossibility of accomplishing, in the anxious times we are living through, such a great work requiring both calm and careful thought as the convening of a Local Council. I reserve for myself, when the fitting time for this will come, in accordance with the ancient examples of the Orthodox Emperors, the task of giving this work momentum and convening a Council of the All-Russian Church for the canonical discussion of matters of faith and Church administration."

However, Pobedonostev's victory could only be temporary: society's interest in the reforms was increasing, and even V.M. Skvortsov in the conservative journal *Missionerskoe Obozrenie* [*Missionary Review*], after pointing out that the martyred Great Prince Sergius Alexandrovich had been in favour of the reforms, expressed the opinion that "the reform of the administration of the dominant Church has appeared as *the logical end and natural consequence of the confessional* reform which was so quickly and decisively pushed through by S.Yu. Witte and a special Conference of the Committee of Ministers".

On May 5, the Tsar consented to see the metropolitan, who explained that to delay the reform was neither possible nor desirable. "But as long as Pobedonostsev is alive," he said, "we cannot expect much." On May 18 the Tsar officially thanked the Synod for the icon and the report that had been composed two months before, thereby indicating that Pobedonostsev's bid to keep the Petrine system untouched had failed...

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Meanwhile, on April 17, the Sunday of Pascha, 1905, a decree "On the Strengthening of the Principles of Religious Toleration" was published, abolishing the last significant discrimination against non-Orthodox religion. Such a decree had been dear to the heart of the Tsar since his early years, but he had desisted out of respect for his teacher, Pobedonostsev.

St. John of Kronstadt, among others, was critical of the decree, seeing it as

yet another product of the revolutionary unrest: "Look at what is happening in this kingdom at the present time: everywhere students and workers are on strike; everywhere there is the noise of parties who have as their goal the overthrowing of the true monarchical order established by God, everywhere the dissemination of insolent, senseless proclamations, disrespect for the authority of the ruling powers established by God, for 'there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God': children and young people imagine that they are the masters and commanders of their own fates; marriage has lost all meaning for many and divorces at will have multiplied endlessly; many children are left to the whims of fate by unfaithful spouses; some kind of senselessness and arbitrariness rule… Finally, an unpunished conversion from Orthodoxy into any faith whatever is allowed [the Decree of April 17, 1905]; even though the same Lord Whom we confess designated death in the Old Testament for those denying the law of Moses.

"If matters continue like this in Russia and the atheists and crazy anarchists are not subjected to the righteous retribution of the law, and if Russia is not cleansed of its many tares, then it will become desolate like the ancient kingdoms and cities wiped out by God's righteous judgement from the face of the earth for their godlessness and their wickedness: Babylon, Assyria, Egypt, Greece-Macedonia. Hold fast, then, Russia, to your faith, and your Church, and to the Orthodox Tsar if you do not wish to be shaken by people of unbelief and lawlessness and if you do not wish to be deprived of your Kingdom and the Orthodox Tsar. But if you fall away from your faith, as many *intelligenty* have fallen away, then you will no longer by Russia or Holy Rus', but a rabble of all kinds of other faiths that wish to destroy one another…"

Immediately after the publication of the decree on religious toleration, tens of thousands of uniates in the western regions, who had been Orthodox only formally, returned to uniatism, and the Orthodox began to suffer persecution. Archbishop Anthony (Khrapovitsky) of Volhynia addressed this problem in his report to the Pre-Conciliar Convention of 1906 entitled "On Freedom of Confession":

"Freedom of confession (not 'freedom of conscience': that is a senseless expression)," he said, "must of course be preserved in the State: there is no point in keeping anybody by force in the ruling Church; it is also necessary to excommunicate from the Church those who declare themselves to be outside her confession after exhorting them twice. But this is quite another matter than freedom of religious *propaganda…*

"Orthodoxy has very little to fear from the preaching of foreign religious dogmas, and hardly any religion would decide to address Orthodox listeners

with such preaching; this would mean hoping to draw people from the light of the sun to a dim kerosene lamp. The propaganda of heterodoxy is possible only through cunning, deception and violence. Who does not know by what means the Latins drew to themselves 200,000 Orthodox Christians last year? They persistently spread the rumour that the Royal Family and even St. John of Kronstadt was joining their heresy, assuring the people that supposedly all Catholics would be re-ascribed to the Polish gentry and be given lands, while the Orthodox would be returned to the status of serfs. But that was still only half the sorrow. Representing in themselves almost the whole of the landowning class in the western and south-western region, the Polish gentry and counts are oppressing the Orthodox in their factories… The peasants there are completely in the hands of these contemporary feudal lords, and when they meet them they kiss their feet.

"And so even now, when there is not yet equality of religious confessions, they are bestowing on the renegades from Orthodoxy both money and forests and lands, while the faithful sons of the Church are being insulted, deprived of employment and expelled together with their earnings from the factories. What will the situation be when there is equality of confessions?

"The Protestants are acting by the same means in the north-western region, as are various sects in the Crimea and New Russia. Orthodoxy and the Orthodox, by contrast, despise such ways of acting. The Muslim or Jew, on accepting holy baptism, is often immediately lynched, that is, killed by his former co-religionists… Can the government leave them defenceless? Thousands of Christians have fallen into Mohammedanism in the last year; even several purely Russian families in Orenburg diocese have done so, having been subjected to threats, bribes and absurd rumours about the imminent re-establishment of the Kirghiz kingdom with its hereditary dynasty, together with expulsion and even the beating up of all Christians.

"If the governments of all cultured countries punish falsification in trade, as well as the spreading of sensational false rumours and deliberate slander, etc., then our government, too, if it is to remain consistent, must protect the Orthodox people from the deceit, blackmail and economic and physical violence of the heterodox. They are able to act only by these means, as did the Catholics during the time of the Polish kingdom, when they seduced the Orthodox into the unia.

"Let us remember one more important circumstance that is completely ignored when talking about religious toleration.

"If our flock were catechized both in the truths of the faith and in how they should look on various faiths, peoples and estates, it would be possible to

present them to themselves and to the spiritual influence of their pastors in the struggle for faith and nationality.

"But our government – more precisely, our State – has been attracted since the time of Peter and after by the aims of purely cultural and state centralization, constricting, distorting and even half eclipsing the religious consciousness and religious life of the Orthodox people. In the 17th century the latter had nothing to fear from any propaganda (except that of the Old Ritualists, of course), because, if not each peasant family, at any rate every village had its own teachers of dogmas, who lived the same peasant life as all the other village dwellers. Moreover, discipline in Church and everyday life was as strong as among the Jewish *hassidim* or, to take a closer example, our contemporary *yedinovertsy*, to whom also, thanks to their conditions of life, no propaganda presented any danger.

"But the government of the 18th century tore away the clergy from the people, driving the former into the ranks of a separate caste, and educating it, not in the concepts and everyday discipline of popular Orthodoxy, but in the traditions of the Latin school and scholastic theological theory. The people was further and further estranged from Church literature and Church services, and which is still more sad, remained alone in its religious way of life, in its fasts, its prayers, its pilgrimages. The clergy became more and more learned and cultured, while the people became more and more ignorant and less steeped in Orthodox discipline. That is what happened with the Great Russian people, which was Orthodox from ages past. But what are we to say about the down-trodden, enslaved Western Little Russians and Belorussians, or about the descendants of the formerly baptized non-Russian peoples beyond the Volga and in Siberia?

"All these people, abandoned as regards spiritual development, chained to the land, had, willingly or unwillingly, to be reconciled to the thought that the Tsar, the lords, the bishops and the priests were reading sacred books and studying the holy faith for them, while they themselves would listen to them – learned people who could find the leisure and the means to read.

"The grey village hardly distinguishes between spiritual bosses and secular ones, spiritual books and science from secular ones. Everything that comes from the legislative authorities comes from God; everything that is published in the newspapers comes from the Tsar and the bishops. Look at what views on life our poor people has come up against: the mountains of proclamations, the blasphemous brochures, the caricatures of August Personages and Fr. John of Kronstadt and all the rest with which yester-year's enlighteners have blessed their homeland.

"This is the clue how the people can believe the Catholic proclamations about his Majesty accepting this religion, and the revolutionary proclamations to the effect that the Tsar has supposedly ordered the landowners to be robbed, etc. And so, having taken into its hand the people's conscience, can the Russian government renounce Orthodoxy before the people has been catechized in it consciously? If it would like to take an extra-confessional stance, then let it first return to the people the confessional conscience it leased from it, let it give out millions over several years for the establishment of catechists – at least one for every 300 people (now there is one priest for every 2000 Orthodox Christians). But until then it is obliged to protect the Orthodox people from violent deception, from economic compulsion to apostasy.

"We said that an elective authority will not dare to violate the people's will, but it must get to know it and obey it. Government authority has, of course, lofty privileges, but it too is obliged to go in agreement, if not with everything that is contemporary, but in any case with the historically unchanged will of the people. It is in it that Russia, as a growing collective organism, as a nation, as an idea pouring out in history, is recognized. And what is this people in its history and its present? Is it an ethnographical group or a group, first of all, of self-defence at the level of the state? No, the Russians define themselves as a *religious* group, as a confessional group, including in this concept both the Georgians and the Greeks who cannot even speak Russian. According to the completely just definition of K. Aksakov and other Slavophiles, the Russian people thinks of itself as the flock of God, the Church, a society of people that accomplished their salvation with the guidance of its faith and through *prayer and labour*. The people looks on its life as a cross given it by God, and the whole of its earthly state prosperity it has entrusted to the Tsar. Let the Tsar with his boyars and warriors repel the enemies of his Orthodox country, let him take taxes and recruits for this end, let the Tsar judge his servants and punish thieves, robbers and other evil-doers; all this is of little interest to the Russian man, his work is to struggle in labour and prayer, and to learn virtue from the people of God. And let the Tsar and his warriors take care that nobody hinders him in this.

"True, in this country there are many people who are foreign to the aim of life that is embraced by the whole people, that is, salvation. But they do not hinder Russian people in this, let them without hindrance live in accordance with their 'pagan habits' and pray to their gods, until they recognize the true faith. But, of course, not only the personal life of each man, but also the mission of the whole Orthodox country is seen by each Russian as consisting in exalting the light of Orthodoxy both among his own 'heathen', and beyond the frontiers of his native land, as is proved for us by the constant missionary colonization by Russians of the East and the North, beginning from the 9th

century, and their constant consciousness of their historical duty to liberate their co-religionists from under the Turk and bring down his 'God-hated kingdom', for which a litany is raised at the New Year *moleben* since the days of Ivan III to the days of Nicholas II.

"To renounce this task, which the people has considered for nine centuries to be its most important work, and to establish equality of rights for all faiths in the Russian state – this means annihilating Russia as an historical fact, as an historical force; it means carrying out a great violation on the thousand-year-old people than the Tatar khans or the usurpers of the Time of Troubles carried out…"

45. THE 1905 REVOLUTION

The destruction of the Russian Baltic fleet at Tsushima in May, 1905 increased the political tensions in Russia. A meeting in Moscow of representatives from the *zemstva*, the nobility and the municipal councils on May 23-25 called for the convocation of a national representative body elected on a secret, equal, universal and direct ballot. On June 6 a delegation from the meeting led by Prince Sergius Trubetskoj was received by the Tsar, and on August 6 what became known as the Bulygin Constitution was published: a proposal for a consultative parliamentary body called the Duma.

Now the Tsar was never against *consultative* bodies. He welcomed every opportunity to find out more about the opinions and attitudes of his subjects. But he said: "I shall never in any circumstances agree to a representative form of government, for I consider it harmful for the people entrusted to me by God". The Bulygin Constitution was far from being a representative form of government in the full western sense: its powers were limited, and "the inviolability of autocratic power" was retained. Nevertheless, it was seen as a major concession by the government to the liberal opposition.

But it was too little, too late. "Workers went on strike, peasants attacked landowners, students rioted, swathes of the Baltics and Caucasus became independent revolutionary fiefdoms." On August 27 the government made another unexpected concession: university faculties were allowed to elect rectors and students to hold assemblies. Moreover, the police were told to keep out of the universities, making them in effect "no-go" areas.

Soon workers and other non-students joined the student meetings, and, as Richard Pipes writes, "academic work became impossible as institutions of higher learning turned into 'political clubs': non-conforming professors and students were subjected to intimidation and harassment… In Witte's view, the university regulations of August 27 were a disaster: 'It was the first breach through which the Revolution, which had ripened underground, emerged into the open.'"

On September 5 Count Witte came back from negotiating the Treaty of Portsmouth (USA) with Japan. Russia surrendered the southern half of Sakhalin and the Liaotung peninsula with Port Arthur. There was no indemnity. In general, this was a good deal for Russia. However, there was no hiding the fact that a European great power had been defeated by an Asiatic on, and, as Thomas F. Mullard pointed out, this "radically reshaped" the mood of the Orient: "There is no Asiatic country, from China to Persia, which has not felt the reaction to the Russo-Japanese war, and in which it has failed to wake new ambitions. These usually find expression in a desire to assert

independence, to claim equality with the white races, and have had the general result of causing Western prestige to decline in the East."

Witte now used his restored prestige to speak in favour of the creation of a constitutional monarchy along the lines of the resolution of the *Zemstvo* Congress held in Moscow the month before. The Tsar was not convinced. He saw himself as having to choose between two courses: the first was to "appoint an energetic military man and try by all means to suppress the rebellion; then there would be a pause, and again in a few months one would have to act by force again; but this would mean torrents of blood and in the end would lead to the present situation, that is, the authority of the power would have been demonstrated, but the result would remain the same… The other path is to present the population with civil rights… Among other things, that would imply the obligation of passing every bill through the State Duma. This, in essence, is a constitution."

These words of the Tsar would seem to indicate that he did not believe in the use of force to suppress the rebellion. Nevertheless, he did think of making the reliable and loyal D.F. Trepov, the Governor-General of St. Petersburg, a kind of military dictator.

However, "to the question whether he [Trepov] could restore order in the capital without risking a massacre, he answered that 'he could give no such guarantee either now or in the future: rebellion *[kramola*] has attained a level at which it is doubtful whether [bloodshed] could be avoided. All that remains is faith in the mercy of God.'

"Still unconvinced, Nicholas asked Grand Duke Nikolai Nikolayevich to assume dictatorial powers. The Grand Duke is said to have responded that the forces for a military dictatorship were unavailable and that unless the Tsar signed the manifesto he would shoot himself…"

With "Nikolasha's" hysterical rejection, the Tsar gave in: if he could not impose a dictatorship, he would have to allow a constitution. This seemed the only way out of the crisis which now threatened the fall of the regime. For at the end of September a wave of strikes, economic in origin, but politicised by the Union of Unions and the radical students, hit Central Russia. They culminated in a vast general strike led by the railwaymen in mid-October. The government seemed powerless to act: the country was descending into anarchy.

In his Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which was entitled "On the Improvement of Order in the State", the Tsar declared: "The disturbances and unrest in St Petersburg, Moscow and in many other parts of our Empire have

filled Our heart with great and profound sorrow. The welfare of the Russian Sovereign and His people is inseparable and national sorrow is His too. The present disturbances could give rise to national instability and present a threat to the unity of Our State. The oath which We took as Tsar compels Us to use all Our strength, intelligence and power to put a speedy end to this unrest which is so dangerous for the State. The relevant authorities have been ordered to take measures to deal with direct outbreaks of disorder and violence and to protect people who only want to go about their daily business in peace. However, in view of the need to speedily implement earlier measures to pacify the country, we have decided that the work of the government must be unified. We have therefore ordered the government to take the following measures in fulfilment of our unbending will:

- Fundamental civil freedoms will be granted to the population, including real personal inviolability, freedom of conscience, speech, assembly and association.

- Participation in the Duma will be granted to those classes of the population which are at present deprived of voting powers, insofar as is possible in the short period before the convocation of the Duma, and this will lead to the development of a universal franchise. There will be no delay to the Duma elect already been organized.

- It is established as an unshakeable rule that no law can come into force without its approval by the State Duma and representatives of the people will be given the opportunity to take real part in the supervision of the legality of government bodies.

We call on all true sons of Russia to remember the homeland, to help put a stop to this unprecedented unrest and, together with this, to devote all their strength to the restoration of peace to their native land."

The revolutionaries saw the Manifesto as a capitulation to their demands – and continued with their revolution. However, the attitude of most people in the provinces was: "Thank God, now there will be an end to the strikes and disturbances – 'the Tsar has given liberty', there is nothing more to demand. This liberty was understood in different ways, and in a very woolly way: but the popular masses came out onto the streets with portraits of the Tsar and national flags; they celebrated the publication of the manifesto and did not protest against it."

Witte was invited to chair the Council of Ministers, whom he, and not the Tsar, now selected. His position under the constitution was now critical – and critically ambiguous. Was he still primarily a servant of the Tsar - or a lackey of the Masons in the Duma?

Fr. Lev Lebedev writes: "When some time had passed, Witte began to praise his Majesty with sweet words for 'the people's representation' in which the Tsar would find support. Nicholas II interrupted him: 'Sergius Yulyevich: I very well understand that I am creating for myself *not a helper,* but *an enemy*, but I comfort myself with the thought that I will succeed in bringing up a state force which will turn out to be useful for providing Russia in the future with a path of peaceful development, without sharp undermining of those supports on which she has lived for so long.' In the new order the old State Council, composed of high-ranking dignitaries appointed by the Tsar was preserved, as a kind of 'higher chamber'. However, all this together with the Duma *was not a parliament*, since his Majesty was not intending to renounce his autocratic power. He made a public declaration about this during a reception of a monarchist organization: 'The reforms I announced on October 17 will be realized unfailingly, and the freedoms given by me in the same way to the whole of the population are inalienable. But my Autocracy will remained *what it was of old.*'…"

But could the Autocracy remain what it was when there was now a mainly liberal Duma with not merely consultative, but also legislative powers, and of which the October Manifesto said that it "*establishes as an inviolable rule that no law can come into force without the approval of the State Duma,*"? Although the Manifesto made no mention of the word "constitution", many thought, not unreasonably, that the Tsar had committed himself to a constitution that permanently limited his autocratic powers. Of course, the Tsar's power had never been unlimited in an absolutist sense – as Protopriest John Vostorgov said, "The supreme power in a pure, true monarchy is unlimited, but not absolute, for it is limited morally by the content of its ideal" – which is the Law of God. It was because he always saw himself as under God's law that when the Tsar came to review the Basic Laws of the Empire in April, 1906, he removed the word "unlimited" from Article 1 to describe the nature of his power, while retaining the word "autocratic".

However, the Tsar remained above all *human* (as opposed to Divine, Church) laws in his realm, since he was the source of them, so that if he bestowed a law, or manifesto, or even a constitution, he was entitled to change it or remove it altogether. As N. Rodzevich wrote in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*: "Let us assume that the Tsar is not knowledgeable on military affairs. Well, he selects an experienced general and declares that without the agreement of this general no military question may be decided. A time comes and the Tsar realizes that the general selected by him gives bad advice; can he really not change his previous order and dismiss the general? Of course he may do so. Similarly, if the Duma does not warrant the Tsar's confidence, would he not be justified in dissolving the Duma and then creating a new one or refusing to convoke one at all? This depends on the Autocrat's will."

The Tsar's right to dissolve or prorogue the Duma, and promulgate new laws in the interval between elections, was enshrined in Article 87. As Reginald E. Zelnik writes, "Because the same article also required that, for such laws to be valid, the next Duma must approve them within two months, Article 87 by itself did not directly undermine the new order, but it did create a situation where an insecure or embattled regime could promulgate a law to change the Fundamental Laws themselves, and thereby alter the composition of the next Duma." Also, "the Fundamental Laws invested the tsar (still called 'autocrat') and his appointed ministers with what appeared to be full power over diplomacy and war, but made any increase in the military budget contingent on the approval of the Duma." This created a relationship between Tsar and Duma similar to that between the English King Charles I and the English parliament…

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The Manifesto, far from calming political passions, excited them to the utmost. Anarchy increased as young revolutionaries rampaged in the cities; the press, freed from all restraints and almost exclusively owned by Jews, raged against the government; and the police, overstretched and unsure of their rights under the new constitution, hesitated to apply strong measures. However, in Petersburg there was a new phenomenon: demonstrations in favour of the Tsar, the so-called "Black Hundreds", or monarchist counter-revolution…

The view generally accepted in the West is that the "Black Hundreds" simply slaughtered masses of Jews. But the truth is somewhat different…

The general pattern was as follows. First the revolutionaries, usually led by young Jews, would call on the population to strike and free prisoners from the prisons, and would themselves tear down the symbols of tsarist authority, although "undoubtedly both Russians and Jews took part in the destruction of portraits and monograms". Then, a day or two later, when it was clear that the authorities were unwilling or unable to restore order, the anti-Jewish pogrom would begin.

Thus in Kiev the pogrom began on October 18. "A crowd of Jews seized the building of the City Duma, tore down national flags and mocked the portraits of the Tsar. One of the Jews cut the head out of a portrait [of the Tsar], put his own [in the hole] and shouted: 'Now I'm the Tsar!' Others declared to the stunned Kievans: 'Soon your St. Sophia cathedral will become our synagogue!'"

"'In its initial stage the pogrom undoubtedly had the character of revenge taken for the offence to national feeling. Subjecting the Jews they met on the street to blows, smashing shops and trampling the goods they took out of them into the dirt, the pogromists would say: "There's your freedom, there's your constitution and revolution; there are your tsarist portraits and crown". And then on the following morning, the 19th, a thousand-strong crowd made its way from the Duma to St. Sophia square carrying the empty frames from the broken portraits of the tsar, the tsarist monogram and smashed mirrors. They went to the university, repaired the damaged portraits and served a *moleben*, while 'Metropolitan Flavian exhorted the crowd not to behave badly and to disperse to their homes'. 'But at the same time that the people constituting the centre of the patriotic demonstration… maintained exemplary order in it, people joining it from the street allowed themselves to commit all kinds of violence in relation to the Jews they met and to people wearing the uniforms of academic institutions [students].' Then the demonstrators were joined by 'black workers, homeless inhabitants of the flea market and bare-footed people from the river-bank', 'groups of pogromists smashed up Jewish flats and stalls and threw out property and goods onto the street. Then they would be partly destroyed and partly stolen.'… The pogromists passed by the stalls of the Karaite Jews without touching them, and also 'those Jewish flats where they were shown portraits of the emperor'. [On the 19th the wealthiest Jewish shops in the centre were looted.] Proceeding from the fact that 'almost two thirds of all the trade in the city was in the hands of the Jews', [Senator] Turau calculates the losses, including the homes of the rich, 'at several million roubles'. They set out to destroy not only Jewish houses, but also the flats of well-known liberal social activists…

"In all during the days of the pogrom, according to the approximate estimate of the police (some of those who suffered were taken away by the crowd), 47 people were killed, including 12 Jews, while 205 were wounded, one third of them Jews.

"Turau concludes his report with the conclusion that 'the main cause of the Jewish pogrom in Kiev was the long-existing enmity between the Little Russian and Jewish population, based on the difference in their world-views. The immediate cause was the insult to national feeling by the revolutionary manifestations, in which a prominent role belonged to Jewish youth.' The simple people saw 'the Jews alone as being to blame for the insults and imprecations against everything that was holy and dear to it. It could not understand the revolutionary movement after the concessions given it, and explained it by the striving of the Jews to gain "their own Yiddish freedom".' 'The failures of the war, at which Jewish youth always openly expressed its most lively joy, their avoidance of military service, their participation in the revolutionary movement, in a series of violent acts and murders of high-

ranking people, and undoubtedly the irritation of the simple people against the Jews – that is why there were incidents in Kiev when many Russians openly gave refuge in their houses to poor Jews hiding from the violence, while sharply refusing to give it to young Jews.'

"The newspaper *Kievlianin* also wrote about this. 'Unfortunate Jews! What were these thousands of families guilty of?… To their own woe and misfortune the Jews have not been able to restrain their madmen… But, you know, there are madmen among us Russians, too, and we have not been able to restrain them.'

"The revolutionary youth went mad – and it was the elderly and peaceful Jews who had to pay for it…"

Indeed, the older generation of Jewry did not support the young. "'[Jewish] orthodoxy was in a struggle, not always open, but hidden, against the Jewish intelligentsia. It was clear that orthodoxy, in condemning the liberation movement in Jewry, was striving to win the goodwill of the government.' But it was already late. By 1905 the autocracy had generally lost control in the country. While traditional Jewry by that year had completely lost a whole, and already not the first, *generation*, which had departed into Zionism, into secular liberalism, rarely into enlightened conservatism, and – the most significant in its consequences – into the revolutionary movement."

"It is not surprising," continues Solzhenitsyn, "that 'in many places… an active struggle of prosperous religious elements in Jewry against the revolution was noticed. They helped the police to catch Jewish revolutionaries, and to break up demonstrations, strikes, etc.' Not that it was nice for them to be on the side of the government. But… they not want to accept the revolutionary law, for they honoured *their own*. While for many young revolutionaries the religious 'Union of the Jews' in Bialystok and other places was 'Blackhundredist'."

It must also be emphasized that the main motivation for this flood of Jews into the revolutionary movement was not the restrictions placed by the government on the civil rights of Jewry (which were in any case being quickly whittled down), but infection with the same liberal and revolutionary ideas as infected so many contemporary Russians. "'The participation of Jews in the general Russian revolutionary movement can only to a very small degree be explained by their inequality… The Jews only shared the general mood' of the struggle against the autocracy. Is that to be wondered at? The young members of *intelligenty* families, both Russian and Jewish, had for years heard at home [such phrases as]: 'the crimes of the authorities', 'a government of murderers'. They then rushed into revolutionary action with all their energy

and ardour."

In Odessa, the Manifesto was published on the 17th. The next day, "General Kauldbars, the commander of the Odessa military district, in order to 'give the population the unhindered opportunity to use the freedom given by the Manifesto in all its forms', ordered all the soldiers not to appear on the streets, 'so as not to spoil the joyful mood in the population'. However, 'this mood did not last for long. From all sides individual groups, mainly of Jews and young students, streamed towards the centre of the city' with red flags of shouts of "Down with the autocracy!" and "Down with the police!" And orators summoned them to the revolution. From a metallic image on the Duma of the words 'God save the Tsar!', the first two words were broken off. They rushed into the Duma hall, 'a huge portrait of his Majesty the Emperor was torn to pieces, while in the Duma the national flag was replaced with the red flag. They removed the hats from a protopriest, deacon and reader who were passing by in a cab to a pannikhida, and then later at the burial they stopped the procession 'and interrupted the singing of "Holy God" with shouts of "Hurrah!"' 'They dragged along a dead cat and a scarecrow without its head and with the inscription "This is the autocracy", and collected money on the spot "for killing the Tsar" or "for the death of Nicholas"'. 'The young people, and especially the Jews, with an evident consciousness of their superiority began to point out to the Russians that freedom had not been given voluntarily, but had been snatched away from the government by the Jews… They openly said to the Russians: "Now we will rule you"', and also: 'We gave you God, we will also give you a tsar'." Prophetic words when we remember that it was little more than twelve years to the Jewish Soviet "tsardom"…

Soon the students were forcing workers to take off their hats in front of the red flag. When the workers refused, they were shot at. But though unarmed, they succeeded in dispersing the crowd. Then, however, another thousand-strong crowd of Jews began to fire at the workers, killing four. Thus "in various places there began fights and armed confrontations between Russians and Jews: Russian workers and people without fixed occupations, the so-called hooligans, began to catch and beat up Jews. They went on to break into and destroy Jewish houses, flats and stalls."

The next day the "counter-pogrom" of the Russians against the Jews began in earnest. Crowds of Russians of all classes carrying icons and portraits of the tsar, and singing "Save, O Lord, Thy people" marched into the centre of the town. There the revolutionaries shot at them, a boy carrying an icon was killed, bombs were thrown…

Open warfare between Jews and Russians now began.

"On October 31 [21?] a crowd of Jews destroyed state emblems and seized the Duma, proclaiming a 'Danubian-Black Sea Republic' headed by the Jew Pergament. It was suggested that the Don and Kuban lands should be 'cleansed' of Cossacks and handed over to Jewish settlers. Moreover, Jewish organizations *armed* from four to five thousand warriors, and not a little blood was shed in conflicts with soldiers. All this was described by the correspondent of the [London] *Times*, who was a witness of the events, in an article entitled 'A Regime of Terror' (Jewish terror was meant). Then in London the chief rabbi of the Spanish communities Gasper came out in print denying *everything* ('Not one Jew insulted the Majesty' of the Tsar) and affirming that that Tsarist troops and police had killed four thousand completely innocent Jews! The *Times* correspondent from Odessa refuted this fabrication: in general there had not been thousands of Jews killed. During the Odessa disorders only 293 Jews had been buried, of whom many died a natural death. The Englishman also pointed out that the provocation had been arranged by the 'central Jewish organization in Switzerland which sent its emissaries from Poland to Odessa'. He quoted L.Ya. Rabinovich on how the transfer of arms had taken place. But such witnesses from objective foreign observers were extremely rare! On the other hand, the whole of the world's press was filled with descriptions of the horrors of the Jewish pogroms, which rolled in an especially powerful wave from October 18 to 21 in the cities of Orel, Kursk, Simferopol, Rostov-on-Don, Ryazan, Velikie Luki, Ivanovo-Voznesensk, Kaluga, Kazan, Novgorod, Smolensk, Tula, Ufa, Tomsk, Warsaw, many others and in all the cities of the 'Pale of Settlement'. Of course, nothing was said about how these pogroms had been *provoked by the Jews themselves* (especially often by firing at Russians from the windows of *well-known Jewish houses*). In our days it has become clearer that at that time *social-democratic* organizations led by Jews deliberately spread leaflets among the people calling on them to [start] *Jewish pogroms*."

The wrath of the people was directed not only against the Jews but against leftists generally. Thus in Tver a crowd set fire to the theatre in which the leftists were sitting – 200 perished. Another crowd threatened to do the same thing in Balashov, but thanks to the courageous actions of the governor, Peter Arkadyevich Stolypin, there were no victims.

And yet, considering the scale of the disturbances, there were far fewer victims than might have been expected – 1000 dead and several thousand wounded, according to one Jewish source. Again, the Jew G. Sliozberg, a contemporary witness who was in possession of all the information, wrote: "Fortunately, all these hundreds of pogroms did not bring in their wake significant violence against the persons of Jews, and in the vast majority of places the pogroms were not accompanied by murders." For in 1905 faith and

morality still held the great majority of the Orthodox people back from taking revenge against their persecutors. It would be a different story during the Civil War…

On October 27 the Tsar wrote to his mother "that the *pogromshchiki* represented 'a whole mass of loyal people', reacting angrily to 'the impertinence of the Socialists and revolutionaries… and, because nine-tenths of the trouble-makers are Jews, the People's whole anger turned against them.' This analysis was accepted by many foreign observers, notably British diplomats like the ambassador at St. Petersburg, Sir Charles Hardinge, his councillor, Cecil Spring Rice, and the Consul-General in Moscow, Alexander Murray." This analysis was also supported by Senator Kuzminsky, who concluded that "the October disturbances and disorders were caused by factors of an undeniably revolutionary character and were crowned by a pogrom of Jews exclusively as a result of the fact that it was the representatives of this nationality who took the dominant part in the revolutionary movement".

Alexander Solzhenitsyn has shown by extensive quotations from Jewish sources that the Jews were well aware of the true state of affairs. Even the more honest Jews had to admit that 1905 was in essence "a Jewish revolution". "Thus in November, 1905 a certain Jacob de Haas in an article entitled 'The Jewish Revolution' in the London Zionist journal *Maccabee* wrote directly: 'The revolution in Russia is a Jewish revolution, for it is the turning point in Jewish history. This situation stems from the fact that *Russia is the fatherland of about half of the overall number of Jews inhabiting the world…*'"

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The revolution involved not only Russians and Jews, but also other nationalities within the empire. And sometimes intervention by foreign countries threatened, as when there was anarchy in the Baltic provinces, and, as Dominic Lieven writes, "William II promised Professor Theodore Schiemann, a leading spokesman for the Baltic Germans in Berlin, that if the Russian monarchy fell, Germany would not abandon the Balts…" There is no question that the 1905 revolution could have led to international war…

It was the Tsar himself who gradually reintroduced order. He decided to make concessions in Finland, restoring the old constitution there. But in Poland and the Baltic region he imposed martial law, and he sent loyal troops to quell disturbances in many other parts of the country.

Meanwhile, a new Interior Minister, Peter Durnovo, restored order in the capital…

For in Petersburg, as Lieven writes, a situation of dual power came into being: "a Soviet of Workers' Deputies, whose outstanding personality was Leon Trotsky, existed alongside the imperial government and attempted to lead and coordinate the revolutionary movement. The Bolsheviks organised an armed uprising of Moscow workers in December. The main strand in the liberal opposition proclaimed the revolution must continue until parliamentary government and universal suffrage were achieved. …"

There were also peasant disturbances, which were particularly significant insofar as the peasants were supposed to be the class most loyal to the Tsar. Some 15 per cent of Russia's manor houses were destroyed in 1905 – and by Russians this time, not Jews.

For "the peasantry," as Pipes writes, "completely misunderstood the October Manifesto, interpreting it in its own manner as giving the communes licence to take over the countryside. Some rural disorders occurred in the spring of 1905, more in the summer, but they exploded only after October 17. Hearing of strikes and pogroms [both anti-Christian and anti-Jewish] in the cities going unpunished, the peasants drew their own conclusions. Beginning on October 23, when large-scale disorders broke out in Chernigov province, the wave of rural disorders kept on swelling until the onset of winters, re-emerging in the spring of 1906 on an even vaster scale. It would fully subside only in 1908 following the adoption of repressive measures by Prime Minister Stolypin.

"… The principal aim of the *jacquerie* was neither inflicting physical harm nor even appropriating land, but depriving landlords and other non-peasant landowners of the opportunity to earn a livelihood in the countryside – 'smoking them out', as the saying went. In the words of one observer: 'The [peasant] movement was directed almost exclusively against landed properties and not against the landlord: the peasants had no use whatever for landlords but they did need the land.' The notion was simple: force the landlords to abandon the countryside and to sell their land at bargain prices. To this end, the peasants cut down the landlord's forests, sent cattle to graze on his pasture, smashed his machinery, and refused to pay rent. In some places, manors were set on fire…

"In an effort to stem the agrarian unrest, the government in early November reduced the due instalments of the redemption payments (payments for the land given the emancipated serfs in 1861) and promised to abolish them altogether in January 1907, but these measures did little to calm the rural districts.

"In 1905 and 1906 peasants by and large refrained from seizing the land they coveted from fear that they would not be allowed to keep it. They still expected a grand national repartition of all the non-communal land, but whereas previously they had looked to the Tsar to order it, they now pinned their hopes on the Duma. The quicker they drove the landlords out, they reasoned, the sooner the repartition would take place…

"The government faced one more trial of strength, this time with the radical left. In this conflict, there was no room for compromises, for the socialists would be satisfied with nothing less than a political and social revolution.

"The authorities tolerated the St. Petersburg Soviet, which continued to sit in session although it no longer had a clear purpose. On November 26, they ordered the arrest of Nosar, its chairman. A three-man Presidium (one of whose members was Leon Trotsky) which replaced Nosar resolved to respond with an armed uprising. The first act, which it was hoped would bring about a financial collapse, was an appeal to the people (the so-called Financial Manifesto), issued on December 2, urging them to withhold payments to the Treasury, to withdraw money from savings accounts, and to accept only bullion or foreign currency. The next day, [the Interior Minister] Durnovo arrested the Soviet, putting some 260 deputies (about one-half of its membership) behind bars. Following these arrests a surrogate Soviet assembled under the chairmanship of Alexander Helphand (Parvus), the theoretician of 'permanent revolution'. On December 6, the St. Petersburg Soviet issued a call for a general strike to being two days later. The call went unheeded, even though the Union of Unions gave it its blessing.

"The socialists were more successful in Moscow. The Moscow Soviet, formed only on November 21 by intellectuals of the three principal socialist parties, decided to press the revolution beyond its 'bourgeois' phase. Their followers consisted of semi-skilled workers, many of them employed in the textile industry, professionally and culturally less mature than their counterparts in the capital. The principal force behind this effort was the Moscow Bolshevik Committee. The Moscow rising was the first occasion in the 1905 Revolution when the socialists took the lead. On December 6, the Moscow Soviet voted to begin the following day an armed insurrection for the purpose of overthrowing the tsarist government, convoking a Constituent Assembly, and proclaiming a democratic republic.

"On December 7, Moscow was paralyzed: the strike was enforced by Soviet agents who threatened with violence anyone who refused to cooperate. Two days later, government forces launched an attack on the insurgents; the latter responded with urban guerilla tactics. The arrival of the Semeonovskii

Regiment, which used artillery to disperse the rioters, settled the issue. On December 18 the Executive Committee of the Moscow Soviet capitulated. Over 1,000 people lost their lives in the uprising and whole areas of the ancient capital were gutted…"

By the late autumn the mood was shifting decisively against the radicals. Thus "Paul Benckendorff at the end of 1905 that people who had previously howled with indignation at the mistreatment of a single student were now screaming that no prisoners must be taken and all radicals must be shot. On 1 December Nicholas was able to write to his mother that 'more and more voices are heard protesting that the time has come for the Government to take matters firmly in hand – which is a very good sign indeed.'"

"An even more interesting example," writes E.E. Alferov, `'of how a group of people with a decisive commander can be stronger than an anarchist mob is illustrated by the pacification of Siberia. By the end of the war a one-million-strong army including up to one hundred thousand demobilized soldiers and reservists trying to return to Russia had gathered in Manchuria. Fed on obscure rumours about the events that had taken place in Russia, the whole of this mass of men was subjected to a revolutionary working-over. Discipline weakened. By the end of December, 1905, a situation had developed in such a way that the whole of the Great Siberian way, a distance of 8000 versts was occupied by detachments of disorderly soldiers. The authorities lost their heads. A direct telegraph communication to General Kuropatkin was cut off and communications were maintained only through Shanghai. Practically the whole of Siberia had fallen into anarchy. At many stations strike committees and local centres of revolutionary power were formed. Then his Majesty entrusted to General Meller-Zakomelsky the task of getting rid of the revolutionaries. This energetic man immediately sprang into action. On the night of the Ne Year he and a unit of only about two hundred lads chosen from the Warsaw Guards units, left Moscow on a special train. Meller-Zakomelsky acted decisively. When two agitators were found in a train, they were thrown out of the carriage while it was at full speed. Strike committees in two stations were immediately shot. In another station a revolutionary mob was locked up in a railway building. They tried to offer armed resistance, but were swiftly subdued by the shots of a punishment squad. Just a few more such facts, swiftly communicated by telegraph along the whole route, were enough to ensure that by January 20 the whole Siberian route was liberated, and on February 9 General Meller-Zakomelsky presented his unit to the Tsar in Tsarskoye Selo. This expedition showed how strictness employed in time can prevent great bloodshed.'"

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What part did the Church play in the disturbances? There were some lower clergy who expressed themselves against the Tsar. But the great majority of the clergy were patriots. The bishops conducted themselves in general with great distinction.

Thus, as we have seen, Metropolitan Flavian tried to restrain the patriotic crowds in Kiev. Other Kievan clergy were similarly brave. Thus Protopriest Michael Yedlinsky, the future catacomb hieromartyr, in full vestments, together with his clerics, choir and banners, headed a procession in the direction of the Kontactovi Square and Gostini Place, where some Jewish shops were located. The procession moved along the boulevard, cutting off the rioters from Gostini Place. People in the crowd removed their hats out of respect. When Batyushka turned to the rioters admonishing them, many of them calmed down and began to disperse, even more so because a squadron of cavalrymen began to move onto the square from Alexander Street.

Another hero was Archbishop Platon, the future Metropolitan of North America. Charles Johnston writes: "On October 22, 1905… a huge throng of wildly excited townsmen assembled, inflamed by stories and rumors of misdoings, determined to raid the Jewish quarter [of Kiev]. Their pretext was that a Jew had cursed the Emperor and spat upon his portrait.

"When the multitude assembled Archbishop Platon was in his own church in full canonicals, with his miter upon his head. He heard the angry storming of the crowd without and realized its meaning and purpose. Instantly he came to a decision, and in robes and miter went forth to meet the multitude. Of the church attendants only two accompanied him. So the tumultuous throng came on, crying for vengeance upon the Jews, and Archbishop Platon went to meet them. It had rained heavily all night and was raining still. Paying no heed to the pools of water and mud that covered the street, the Archbishop, seeing that there was but one way to check the hysterically excited mob, knelt down in the street immediately in the path of the turbulently advancing throng and began to pray.

"The profound love and veneration for the Church which is at the center of every Russian heart was touched, and the multitude wavered, halted, grew suddenly silent. Those who were in front checked those who were behind, and a whisper ran through the crowd carrying word that the Archbishop was kneeling in the street praying, in spite of the mud and rain.

"After he had prayed Archbishop Platon rose and confronted the huge throng.

"He spoke, and his fiery words so dominated the multitude that he led the

turbulent thousands to the church and made them promise, calling God to witness, that they would leave the Jews unharmed and return quietly to their homes. Thus the multitude was checked and the work of destruction was prevented by the great churchman's fearless devotion.

"The impression which this exhibition of devoted valor made on the public of Kieff was immediate and profound. The Jews especially were full of gratitude…"

In Moscow an important role was played by the future hieromartyr Metropolitan Vladimir, who powerfully raised his archpastoral voice, rebuking the rebels and exposing the essence of the revolution. Thus on October 16, after the liturgy in the Kremlin Dormition cathedral, he said: "The heart bleeds when you see what is happening around us… It is no longer the Poles, or external enemies, but our own Russian people, who, having lost the fear of God, have trusted the rebels and are holding our first capital as it were in a siege. Even without this we have been having a hard time because of our sins: first harvest failures [in 1891, 1897, 1898 and 1901], then illnesses, then an unsuccessful war [the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-05], and now something unheard of is taking place in Rus': it is as if God has deprived Russian people of their minds. By order of underground revolutionaries, strikes have begun everywhere, in the factories, in the schools, on the railways… Oh if only our unfortunate workers knew who is ruling them, who is sending them trouble-maker-agitators, then they would have turned from them in horror as from poisonous snakes! You know these are the so-called social-democrats, these are the revolutionaries, who have long ago renounced God in their works. They have renounced Him, and yet it may be that they have never known the Christian faith. They denounce her servants, her rites, they mock her holy things. Their main nest is abroad: they are dreaming of subduing the whole world to themselves; in their secret protocols they call us, the Christians, animals, to whom God, they say, has given a human face only in order that it should not be repulsive to them, His chosen ones, to use our services… With satanic cunning they catch light-minded people in their nets, promising them paradise on earth, but they carefully hide from them their secret aims, their criminal dreams. Having deceived the unfortunate, they drag him to the most terrible crimes, as if for the sake of the common good, and, in fact they make him into an obedient slave. They try in every way to cast out of his soul, or at any rate to distort, the teaching of Christ. Thus the commandments of Christ say: do not steal, do not covet what belongs to another, but they say: everything is common, take from the rich man everything you like. The commandments of Christ say: share your last morsel, your last kopeck with your neighbour, but they teach: take from others everything that you need. The commandments of Christ say: give to Caesar what is Caesar's, fear God, venerate the Tsar, but they say: we don't need any Tsar, the Tsar is a tyrant…

The commandments of God say: in patience possess your souls, but they say: in struggle acquire your rights. The commandment of Christ orders us to lay down our souls for our friends, but they teach to destroy people who are completely innocent, to kill them only for the fact they do not agree with them, and do not embark on robbery, but just want to work honourably and are ready to stand for the law, for the Tsar, for the Church of God…"

"The sermon of Metropolitan Vladimir elicited the annoyance of the liberal-democratic press, and also of the liberal clergy. The latter either read the sermon in a shortened version, or did not read it at all. In the leftist newspaper *Russkoe Slovo* 76 priests published a declaration regarding their 'complete non-solidarity' with 'the "Word" of Metropolitan Vladimir…'

"As a result of the actions of the priests quarrels also arose amidst their flock. The Synod, in response to this, unfortunately saw in the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir, not a call to defend the Faith and the Fatherland, but 'a call to the local population to defend themselves in the sphere of political convictions', and in their 'Resolution of October 22, 1905 N 150' instructed the diocesan bishops and the clergy subject to them to make efforts 'to remove quarrels in the population', which, to a large extent, were continuing because of the opposition of the liberal priests to their metropolitan.

"But nothing could devalue or undermine the influence of the epistle of Metropolitan Vladimir on the Muscovites, and the true Russian people responded to it. The day after the publication of the 'Word', the workers began to serve *molebens* and return to work; the city water-supply began to work, the trams began to run, etc. Metropolitan Vladimir himself went to the factories and, after prayer, conducted archpastoral discussions with the workers.

"Later, in evaluating the labours of the holy hierarch Vladimir in overcoming the disturbances of 1905, Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky) said the following notable words about him: 'Meek and humble, never seeking anything for himself, honourable and a lover of righteousness, Vladyka Vladimir gradually and quietly ascended the hierarchical ladder and was immediately exalted by his authority, drawing the hearts of ecclesiastical and patriotic Russia to himself during the days of general instability and treachery, when there were few who remained faithful to their duty and their oath, firm in the defence of the Orthodox Church, the Tsar-Autocrat and the Homeland… when everything began to shake in our Rus', and many pillars began to waver…' (speech of Archbishop Anthony of Zhitomir and Volhynia at the triumphal dinner given by Metropolitan Vladimir in honour of Patriarch Gregory of Antioch who was visiting Russia, 22 February, 1913).

"By 'pillars' Vladyka Anthony probably had in mind the liberal members of the Most Holy Synod, who did not support their brother, Metropolitan Vladimir…" Among these, many suspected the most senior member of the Synod, Metropolitan Anthony of St. Petersburg.

Another under suspicion was Bishop Sergius (Stragorodsky), whose political sympathies were clearly leftist. Thus "when in 1905 the revolutionary professors began to demand reforms in the spiritual schools, then, in the words of Metropolitan Anthony (Khrapovitsky), 'his Grace Sergius… wavered in faith.'" Again, when the revolutionary Peter Schmidt was shot in 1906, Archbishop Sergius, who was at that time rector of the St. Petersburg Theological Academy, served a pannikhida at his grave; and he also gave refuge in his hierarchical house in Vyborg to the revolutionaries Michael Novorussky and Nicholas Morozov (a participant in the attempt on the life of Tsar Alexander II). Having such sympathies, it is not surprising that he was not liked by the Royal Family… Bishop Sergius was to betray the Church to the Bolsheviks after the revolution and become the first Soviet patriarch…

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The close kinship between the abortive revolution of 1905 and the successful revolution of 1917 is indicated by a comparison of dates. Thus the date of the October Manifesto of 1905, October 17, was also the date of the creation of the St. Petersburg Soviet, while the Tsar's Abdication Manifesto of March, 1917 coincided almost exactly with the re-creation of the St. Petersburg Soviet – with Trotsky again the main revolutionary actor. And so if the revolution was born in October, 1917, it had been conceived twelve years before, in 1905…

The 1905 revolution failed because the majority of Russians still remained loyal to the Autocracy, as expressed in this speech pronounced at a reception by the Tsar himself on December 31, 1905 by Professor B.V. Nikolsky (who was shot in June, 1919):

"Your Most Merciful Majesty!

"We have appeared before the face of Your Imperial Majesty at an agonizing time, when the whole people is beginning with horror to understand that Russia is threatened by danger not only from foreign invasions and enslavement to foreign evil, but also from internal civil collapse, while Your Ruling House is threatened not only by open rebellion with its bloody banners, but also by a great schism from the people. At such a time our duty before the Fatherland orders us to witness before the whole people that we have sworn an oath of allegiance and that it is impossible to

order us to change this oath or replace it by another oath to any other earthly authority, and least of all to that authority which itself has betrayed the authority to which we have sworn allegiance. The time has come for us, before the face of the whole world and in the name of the people's oath, to say directly to the Tsar that the universe must know that we, who have so far been voiceless and weaponless, are no less firm in our confession than the enemies of Your Majesty, of the Russian people and of us, who have long been shaming our homeland by their mutinous betrayal, by their hysterical cries and by their treacherous shedding of blood.

"God's punishing hand is hanging over us. War has not given us victory, and peace has not brought us pacification. The intrigues of the international enemies of law and order, who have united into a global Judaeo-Masonic conspiracy, are waging a desperate struggle in our homeland with Christianity, enlightenment and culture… Rebellion is tearing away the borderlands, and treachery is corrupting the age-old Russian lands. Russian people are being driven out of the borderlands by violence and threats, while panic has seized the native population. Mutual distrust and outright hatred are tearing apart the provinces, the tribes, the cities and the villages, the institutions and the unions, the Church and the family, the school and the army. Neither the authorities, nor freedom, nor personal security, nor lawful possessions are recognized. Mindless preachers of violence are conducting propaganda in the army by word, in print and by their very acts; they are calling society to general destruction and armed rebellion. Murder, theft and robbery rule throughout our Fatherland. Russia has become hell, and its existence – torment. God Himself is calling on us to respond on the eve of the 1000th anniversary of our past. Events have powerfully put a threatening question before us: is our history about to be broken?

"However, Your Majesty, our history will not be broken in two if the whole people itself does not want it… That is why we, your faithful subjects, Russian people, in the name of the Tsar and the people and their unbreakable unity, proclaim that we do not recognize and never will recognize any other supreme power than the Tsarist Autocracy, and we dedicate all our spiritual powers and all our resources to its regeneration… For our fidelity there is not, and with God's blessing never will be, any reconciliation with a government acting not in agreement with the oath we have given, and we will be reconciled only on the basis of the complete victory of the traditions, waging an unbending struggle to the end for the Orthodox Faith, for the Russian people and for Your Royal Autocracy."

In 1905 the Jewish revolutionaries in Kiev said: "We gave you God, and we will give you a Tsar!" And so after the revolutionaries came to power in 1917 we see an ever-quickening descent from autocracy to democracy to despotism

in the form of Lenin and Stalin. Democracy cannot be more than a transitional phase because the rule of the people by the people is a contradiction in terms; for "rule" means the imposition of one will on the will of the people, which, at least in its fallen state, is always multiple. It is possible for one man to rule with the consent of the people and for the benefit of the people; but it is impossible for the State to be ruled by the people itself; real democracy is a myth.

That is why the great saints of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries insisted on the necessity – the *religious* necessity – of faithfulness to the Orthodox Tsar. St. Seraphim of Sarov said that after Orthodoxy, faithfulness to the Tsar was "our first Russian duty and the chief foundation of true Christian piety". Again, St. John of Kronstadt said: "The autocracy is the sole condition of the piety of Russia; if there is no autocracy, there will be no Russia; power will be taken by the Jews, who greatly hate us…" And Metropolitan Macarius of Moscow, the apostle to the Altai, said: "You don't want your own Russian authority, so you will have a foreign power over you…"